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# ALL FOR CHRIST;

OR,

HOW THE CHRISTIAN MAY OBTAIN, BY A RENEWED CONSE-  
CRATION OF HIS HEART, THE FULLNESS OF JOY  
REFERRED TO BY THE SAVIOUR JUST  
PREVIOUS TO HIS CRUCIFIXION.

WITH

Illustrations from the Lives of those who have  
made this Consecration.

BY REV. THOMAS CARTER, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF THE GREAT REFORMATION IN ENGLAND,  
IRELAND, SCOTLAND, GERMANY," ETC.

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"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in  
you, and that your joy might be full."

"Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

"And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that  
they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

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## INTRODUCTION.

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5-19-58  
I T is true, sacredly true, that every Christian may obtain in this life a deliverance from sin, and that fullness of joy promised by the Saviour. It is the object, the purpose, of our existence on earth.

Many are deterred from seeking them by a dread of the crosses to be borne. What a phantom! The cross is often heavy before, but *afterward it is light*. Jesus said, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." It is in a higher state of grace that we find this statement emphatically true. Others are hindered by the impression that if we are saved from sin we shall be puffed up with pride. Why should that which magnifies Christ and abases self make us proud? How can the extinction of selfishness, and the receiving of Christ as our only full and perfect Saviour, leave room for pride? There may be mistaken persons, who are professors of holiness who are spiritually proud, as there are mistaken persons

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who are professors of conversion ; but this is no argument against the doctrine, and does not affect the obligation to seek, possess, and enjoy the fullness of joy held out to our view in the Bible.

In the following pages we endeavor to explain the renewed and full consecration of the heart which precedes the reception of this grace, believing that when this is made the greatest difficulty is overcome. We have not enlarged upon the faith which appropriates the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit because it was not our object to do so, and because its exercise becomes comparatively easy after the obstacles in ourselves have been cleared away.

We have not proposed to write a work on perfect love, except so far as is necessary to elucidate our subject, nor a work on the various modes of seeking this blessing ; for some may do so by special prayer, some by an increased study of the Bible, some by seasons of fasting, some by a resort to our summer tabernacles—all most excellent. Our aim is only to explain and enforce that new consecration which is deep enough and thorough enough to bring us up to the standard of the fullness of Christ.

T. C.

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# ALL FOR CHRIST.

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## CHAPTER I.

### PERFECT LOVE—WHAT IT IS NOT.

AS we draw nearer to Christ how often the unbidden wish arises, "Oh ! that we were still nearer, and with him in heaven." The desire seems to grow upon us as we get closer views of the eternal shore. We knew a Christian lady of Brooklyn who, for several days, lay upon the verge of the flood. She herself and her friends supposed that she was just about to pass over. Her symptoms changed, however, and her physician told her that she was likely to recover. So bright, so clear had been the vision of the other side, and so enraptured was she with its glories, that when questioned afterward, as to her feelings at the time, she replied, "I was sorry to return."

A young man, whom we also knew, had almost joined the heavenly company. His father and friends were standing by his side waiting for his departure. His strength was almost gone. The waves were gathering around him, and he was sinking in their embrace, when suddenly, as if inspired by some glorious vision breaking on his eyes, he cried, "Let me go! father, let me go! I see Jesus." And with the words upon his lips he passed away.

An old man had long dwelt in the pampas of South America, and had been long exposed to the temptations of a southern clime. But he never forgot the Saviour, whom he had chosen in his early manhood, and when he came to die, upon the banks of the majestic Parana, where we first saw him, he declared that for an hour before he died he saw Jesus by his bedside about to be his guide to the heavenly mansions. Oh, what unutterable desires must have been concentrated in that hour as the Saviour waited to receive him!

So with others. One who had labored in Africa as a missionary, ere he left the earth exclaimed, a heavenly radiance illumining his



countenance, “ I hear music, beautiful music, the sweetest melodies ! I see glorious sights. I see heaven. Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful things I see. Let me go. Oh, how beautiful ! ”

How often you have rejoiced, Christian brother, at the thought of that hour, and while willing to wait all the days of your appointed time till your change should come, you could hardly repress the desire to be safely in heaven ! How often, O young convert, especially as you recall the joys of conversion, have you exulted at the thought that the last temptation should be overcome, and that you, too, would be home with the Saviour ! Is it not cheering—is it not inspiring—is it not remarkable—that this is the very last expressed wish of Christ himself in behalf of those who were to love him, in that memorable prayer offered up just previous to his crucifixion ? “ Father, I *will* that they also, whom thou hast given me, *be with me where I am* ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.”

But to be with Christ and to behold his glory there must needs be a preparation. In-

deed, they are so inseparably connected that the Saviour states this preparation in the very verse which precedes the wish which he so earnestly expressed: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

And to show that this grace was not limited to the disciples, or to those who knew him in the flesh, or to the immediate successors of the apostles, or to the bishops and ministers of his Church, or to the wise and learned, but is the heritage of all the people, rich and poor, small and great, ignorant and wise, he adds: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." *ms.*

Wherever, then, there is a follower of Christ who believes on him through the teachings of the apostles in the New Testament, who by faith has received the remission of his sins; for that man, woman, or child the Saviour offered up the earnest prayer that he might be perfected in love. He did not mean *perfect in knowledge*. The angels, who shine nearest the throne, are not so. God alone possesses perfect knowledge. We may love

him with a perfect heart, but cannot here serve him with a perfect head.

Neither did He mean a *freedom from infirmities*. Who will assert that we shall ever arrive in this life at a state of grace which shall exempt us from mental and physical imperfection? While the soul is confined in its clay tabernacle, with the senses in full exercise, how many times these senses may lead us to momentary deviations, though checked as soon as consciousness reveals them, from the perfect law of God! These deviations would be sin in the angels, because the sentinels which watch the citadel of their *will* are perfect in their nature of purity, and give instant and perfect warning of danger.

Neither did He mean a *freedom from temptations*. He "was in all points tempted like as we are," and we cannot expect to be above our Master. Even to the heart filled with perfect love the battle is not yet ended. There is no cessation of hostilities until we pass the Jordan of death, and sit down among the redeemed of God. Sin is destroyed within, but evil spirits rage without; and we can nei-

ther sheathe our sword, nor lay our armor down. Satan will attack us with more violence than ever when we become more active in our aggressions against his kingdom; but we have become strong in God. We know what it is to keep close to Christ and live under the shadow of his wing. We can say with joy, "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory."

Neither did He mean a *stationary state*. The heart which has been made perfect in love grows in grace more rapidly than it ever did before. A diseased child cannot grow in vigor until he is healed. Look at that pallid cheek and sunken eye. Sickness is eating away his vital powers. But here is a skillful physician. He undertakes to heal him. He succeeds. Now the child grows in stature and strength. So, when the great Physician has made a perfect cure in our diseased souls, our capabilities rapidly expand, and, in their expansion, are filled with the image of Christ.

Neither did He mean an *independent state*. The purified soul sees as it never did before

its own past sinfulness, and therefore depends more fully on Christ's blood as its only sacrifice—sees its own weakness as it never did, and depends more firmly on Christ as its only strength. It is conscious of being in the everlasting arms. (It has a satisfying, exultant faith that the Saviour will carry it safely through the sorrows of life down to the dark valley—over the river.) Looking at its own feebleness, Christ enlarges to its view. It sees by faith the Celestial City—listens to the strains of heavenly music as they float through the pearly gates, and its spiritual ear catches the inquiry of the angels, "Who is this coming up out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved?"

Neither did He mean a state of *constant rapture*. Christ was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." We must often drink of the same cup, and be baptized with the same baptism. We may be in heaviness through manifold temptations, while our faith remains clear and our moral nature untainted by sin. We may rejoice evermore without being always on the mountain top.

Neither did He mean that perfect love would insure us against *final apostasy*. Life is still a probation in every state of grace. The mature Christian may fall as well as the youngest convert; but if every step forward makes us stronger in God, he who has advanced the most is in least danger of turning back. Just at this point many sincere followers of Christ make a grave mistake. After a severe struggle of their faith they reach the blessing of perfect love: it may be alone with God, in the sacred solitude of their own chamber, or it may be amid some joyous, triumphant, weeping scene of social fellowship. They feel that the cleansing blood of Christ is applied to their hearts, that they have found a blessing so pervading their whole being that no previous one ever equaled it. They leave the hallowed spot with the indefinite idea that if they now lose their faith or fall into sin the precious grace is forfeited and they need try no further, but must relapse hopelessly into their former condition. Alas, how many have been betrayed by this reasoning! If God has shown them only once the nature of that faith



by which they lifted the vail, they know how to exercise it again. If by inadvertence or otherwise they now transgress, they have only to fly by the same faith to the blood which cleanseth from all sin. It is a most inestimable blessing to have found the way—to have learned how to enter up into the promised rest—to have caught a glimpse of the goodly inheritance. Like a traveler who has once been over a road, and who can find it by means of that single, it may be hurried, sight better than by many minute descriptions, the child of God has seen the way, and can pass, therefore, over it again more easily than he ever could before. It was thus with the holy Fletcher during the first weeks or months after he reached the state of entire sanctification. Again and again did he relapse, but he rose again until his faith, by repeated exercise, became steadfast. O, brother! O, young convert! repeat your faith, knock more loudly at the door, and enter again the inner chamber of your Lord's presence.

There is no state on earth in which we cannot sin. It is enough if, in this world of

temptation, we need not sin. In the highest grace we can only be kept by constant watchfulness and prayer. If these are intermitted we fall. Our only safety is to come at once again to the blood which removes every stain.

## CHAPTER II.

### PERFECT LOVE — WHAT IT IS.

**W**HAT is it, more directly, to draw so near to Christ that we enjoy his perfect love?

We answer, It is the fulfillment of the command to love him with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength; and our neighbor as ourselves. Some of its fruits are:—

1. To suffer long when trodden on or ill treated; to be kind; to envy not when others are blessed with wealth and honor which we think we deserve as well as they; to vaunt not ourselves by declaring our good deeds or endowments; not to be puffed up by prosperity; to bear all things patiently; to believe all things possible in favor of the good intentions, however they may be outwardly manifested, of those around us; to hope all things in reference to their conduct; and to endure in these graces under every discouragement.

2. The perfect accord of the will with the

will of Christ, so that we wish, above all else, that he will do what he chooses with us. If he please to work in us by pain and sickness ; or through us in the exhibition of meekness, patience, and long-suffering under insult, loss of friends, poverty, calamity, a martyr's death ; or by us in a life of devotion to his cause, we find our desires so in harmony with his that,

“ With every breath, we love to choose  
Whatever cross our Lord approves.”

This is not mysticism, or an absence of all consideration of ourselves, but a conscious choosing of God. Neither is it an absorption in the Deity, believed in by some of the ancient heathens. Our own will is never lost or merged in his, but simply subject. We may exceedingly desire some object and pray for it, but our language is that of Christ, “ not my will but thine be done.” Hence the lines of our hymns—

“ Let all I am in thee be *lost*,  
Let all be *lost* in God.”

“ Filled with all the Deity,  
All immersed and *lost* in love.”

“ Let me into *nothing* fall ”—

are rather poetic figures than orthodox prayers.

3. Increased usefulness. It is a striking and impressive fact that the Bible mode of securing a revival of religion is the entire sanctification of the children of God. This is so both in the Old and New Testaments. David says, “*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then*”—when he has received a clean heart and the joy of God’s full salvation—“*will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*” So it is in the New Testament. In our Saviour’s prayer, hereinbefore referred to, and contained in the seventeenth chapter of John, he asks “that they also”—future believers in him—“may be one in us, *that the world may believe;*” and again, “that they may be made perfect in one; and *that the world may know that thou hast sent me.*” This is Christ’s method of reaching the unconverted world—a completeness of grace in his own children first, and then the conversion of sinners as a natural result. This

is the only way he prays for sinners in the whole of the prayer. And this was exactly illustrated in the history of his Church. We do not read of a single conversion during the well-nigh fifty days which elapsed between his resurrection and the day of pentecost, though they had the Master's personal presence with them, again and again, for much of that time. But when the disciples received the pentecostal fire, which cleansed their hearts, then their converts were by thousands.

We do not say there are no revivals in communities where there are no Christians enjoying the fullness of God's love; but we might ask experience how much such revivals are worth, and whether the converts, without nursing fathers and mothers to sustain them, are not often so weak and short-lived that they add nothing to the strength of the Church. This is, then, the direct mode for a Christian to become a useful man. The late Wilbur Fisk remarked on his death-bed, "All, all I have been enabled to do for Christ, I owe to the enjoyment of a full salvation."

If *we* want to be clothed with power—if we



want to impress the world—if we want to testify our gratitude in the most effectual way to Him who hath loved us, let us take up the mantle of such Elijahs and do likewise.

4. Destruction of sin in the heart. It is conceded that we cannot do God's will as Adam did, or as the angels do. Our understanding is darkened. All our action is through weakened organs, and we are not able, therefore, to think, speak, and act with a perfect conformity to the letter of God's law. The best of men may, and ought to say,

“Every moment, Lord, I need  
The merit of thy death.”

But from *sin*, that which offends our Father, that which hides his face from us, we are saved. We can, therefore, use and feel the words,

“Every moment, Lord, I have,  
The merit of thy death.”

The fear of God cannot do this. It is a good thing. It is the beginning of wisdom, but not the end of it. It is not strong enough to destroy the inward pollution of the soul—

“Love only can the conquest win,  
The strength of sin subdue.”

Fire, when it glows with intense heat, will melt iron, steel, glass, the granite rocks. So love to Jesus will melt and draw out every moral stain. Anger, self-will, envy, love of the world, disappear, and our hearts lovingly turn to Christ as our complete Saviour. Sad, indeed, it is to hear any one contend that we cannot cease from sin, as we read the inspired description of such a state:—

“But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day-time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and *that cannot cease from sin*; beguiling unstable souls.”

5. Perfect *peace* fills the soul. The Spirit's witness of our acceptance now becomes not only clear and triumphant, as it was often before, but constant—

“Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river.”

As the river rolls deeper and wider toward its mouth, so the peace of the purified soul flows on, not in impeded ripples, like the brook in its course, but smooth and strong until it reaches the ocean of Divine Love in heaven. The precious promise is then fulfilled, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." In the words of John Bunyan, "We are out of reach of Giant Despair, and out of sight of Doubting Castle." Now days and weeks pass, and

"Not a doubt doth arise to darken the skies,  
Or hide for a moment my Lord from mine eyes ;  
In him I am blest, I lean on his breast,  
And lo ! in his wounds I continue to rest."

6. Fullness of *joy* is the climax. The Christian rejoices in God all through his pilgrimage from the very first moment in which his sins are forgiven. It is always true what Nehemiah said to the Jews, "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

How often we forget this sentiment, and go heavily, heartlessly about our Christian duties! Joy is strength. It is *our* strength. But there is a greater height of joy contem-

plated by the Saviour than that which we receive in conversion. It is described in the words, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask and *ye shall receive*, that your *joy may be full*." "These things have I spoken unto you, that my *joy* might remain in you," the joy already possessed by them. Then, as he looks to something higher, he repeats the idea, "That your joy might be *full*." "And now come I to Thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have *my joy fulfilled in themselves*." This is the "joy unspeakable and full of glory" spoken of by Peter as bestowed upon those who received the "end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls;" a salvation from sin, according to the words which he uses in the same connection: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy."

These are only some of the fruits of perfect love. They are sufficient to show that it is a blessing distinct from justification. They are both blessings of the same nature—both con-

sist in love to God and man ; but one is the commencement of it in the heart, the other is when the intellect and will are so educated and molded that the Saviour reigns supremely and constantly in the soul.

If you are a sincere Christian, and deny the possibility of being freed from sin in this life, the controversy between us may be a mere verbal one. Your definition of sin may be different from ours. What is sin? We reply, in the words of John Wesley, "A voluntary transgression of a known law." You reply, "Nay, but all transgressions of the law of God, whether voluntary or involuntary, are sin ; for St. John says, *Sin is a transgression of the law.*" "True, but he does not say, *All transgression of the law is sin.* You say, *None are saved from sin, (in your sense of the word,)* but I do not admit of that sense, because the word is never so taken in Scripture. And you cannot deny the possibility of being saved from sin in *my* sense of the word. And this is the sense wherein the word sin is over and over taken in Scripture."

## CHAPTER III.

RELATIONS OF PERFECT LOVE TO METHODISM  
AND OTHER FORMS OF CHRISTIANITY.

**S**HALL we neglect that salvation for which our Saviour so earnestly prayed? Shall we make light of that which lay so deeply upon the heart of our Lord and Master during those hours which preceded his agony and crucifixion? If he is able to "save to the uttermost," shall we practically deny it? No, let us rather imitate the devoted men and women who, amid the jeers, the scorn, and persecution of the world, plowed up the fallow ground, and sowed the seed of the great tree under which we are so pleasantly resting.

This was the doctrine which our fathers in the Church preached and lived. It was their specialty. It was the object of Methodism. We cannot read the first page of our Discipline without seeing this fact. We are there told that, "in 1729, two young men in England,



reading the Bible, saw they could not be saved without holiness; followed after it, and incited others so to do. In 1737 they saw likewise that men are justified before they are sanctified; but still holiness was their object. God then thrust them out to raise a *holy* people."

It was of this grace that John Wesley wrote the following memorable words:—

"This doctrine is the grand *depositum* which God has lodged with the people called Methodists, and for the sake of propagating this, chiefly, he appeared to have raised us up." . . . "When it is not strongly and explicitly preached there is seldom any remarkable blessing of God, and consequently little addition to the Society and little life in the members of it. Speak and spare not." . . . "Let not regard to any man induce you to betray the truth of God." . . . "Till you press believers to expect full salvation *now* you must not look for any revival." . . . "That point, entire salvation from inbred sin, can hardly ever be insisted upon in preaching or prayer without a particular blessing."

Our bishops, in their Episcopal Address say, "We believe that God's design in raising up the preachers called Methodists in America was to reform the continent and spread scriptural holiness over these lands."

It is to keep preachers in mind of this that every one of them is asked, in every Conference throughout our whole Church, before he is received into full connection, "Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you groaning after it?" And we have all answered in the affirmative. But how many of us are not groaning and wrestling with God for it as we expected to have done! How many of us are no nearer to it than we were when we took upon ourselves the solemn obligation! When shall we fulfill our vows? Are we not waiting, like the impenitent sinner, in the vague hope that something will turn up as we draw near death which will accomplish it in our hearts?

Thank God, we are not alone in the great work of spreading scriptural holiness! Sincere and earnest Christians of all denominations are pleading for it. John Bunyan was a Baptist,

and, theoretically, in some of his works asserts that in this life a Christian cannot be completely saved from sin. But when he wrote, in Bedford jail, the higher experience of his Christian Pilgrim, the truth flashed intuitively upon him. He paints his land of Beulah on this side of the river of death. No one could enter the Celestial City unless he first passed through that realm of beauty, song, and music. There, the "air was very sweet and pleasant." There, "they heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear in the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle in the land. In this country the sun shineth night and day; wherefore this was beyond the valley of the shadow of death." "Here they were within sight of the city they were going to; also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for in this land the shining ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven. *In this land also the contract between the Bride and Bridegroom was renewed.* Here all the inhabitants of the country called them *the holy people.*" What is this but the very blessing of perfect love!

Again, in his "Holy War," he repeats the same sentiment. "When Immanuel had driven Diabolus and all his forces out of the city of Mansoul, Diabolus preferred a petition to Immanuel, that he might have only a small part of the city. When this was rejected, he begged to have only a little room within the walls." But Immanuel answered, "He should have no place in it at all, no, not to rest the sole of his foot." Here is salvation from all sin again.

Fénélon and Madame Guyon were Roman Catholics, yet, in the midst of error and persecution, holiness was their theme. The Episcopalian prays, "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy name." And so in every denomination, wherever there is a soul alive to God, wherever there is a soul retaining justifying grace, it is always hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that it may be filled.

In the beautiful village of D., in the central part of the State of New York, there was a Presbyterian family. We knew them well for years. They were more interested in the doc-

trine of perfect love than any Methodist in the village.

On their tables lay the works of our authors on holiness. They loved it, believed it, talked about it, and lived it. They were the salt of their own Church and of the whole community. Their children were converted young, and grew up devoted men and women, and members of the Church.

In this our day ministers and faithful Christians are beginning to see more and more, eye to eye, and in all Churches to realize the great things which God, in his word, has promised to do for us. There may be differences in our definitions, differences in our mode of reasoning; but who will contend about these as long as the soul is panting for the full salvation of Christ? We ask no stronger statement of the power of our adorable Master to save from sin than that which was given, not long since, by an eloquent Congregational divine of Brooklyn:—

“There is power in the Divine Spirit to enfranchise the heart, and lead it higher and higher to a clear and perfect vision. Whether

or not we yield ourselves to this leading, there is provision for it. If you put your hand upon your heart and say, 'I'll die, but I'll have it;' if you look and long and try every door, and desire it above all other things, it is yours, it is yours."

## CHAPTER IV.

CONSECRATION—CONVERSION AND ENTIRE  
SANCTIFICATION CONTRASTED.

HOW shall we seek perfect love? There are various ways in which it may be sought, but our object in this work is to speak only of one, and we, therefore, reply, By a renewed consecration, or the giving our hearts and lives afresh to Christ, with all the fullness which the light of our past Christian experience shows that he requires.

The reader must, however, bear in mind that consecration, at any stage of our experience, is never sanctification in its primary meaning. The first is the act of the creature, the other of the Creator. This is well illustrated in the case of Solomon's temple. It was consecrated, in its dedication by the priests; afterward it was filled by the presence of God. So the Christian first consecrates his heart. It is afterward filled by the Spirit. But the word

sanctification is sometimes used in a secondary sense, and then it means only consecration. We have an example of both of these significations in the twentieth chapter of Leviticus, seventh and eighth verses, "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the Lord which sanctify you." Here, in verse seven, to sanctify ourselves means the consecration which we make, or the setting ourselves apart to the sacred service of God; in verse eight it is the work which God performs in us. The latter is the primary sense of the word sanctification, and it is thus we use it. When, therefore, we are describing consecration or renewed consecration, we are speaking of a different thing from entire sanctification or perfect love. One constitutes the means, the other the result.

*A perfect consecration must always precede the reception of a pure heart.* There may be many consecrations after conversion at different times, but none of them may reach up to the standard of perfect love. How many times sincere brethren dedicate themselves



afresh during revival services and watch-nights, as well as at the Lord's supper, and how few of those find themselves, afterward, in the actual enjoyment of full salvation! Because the consecration was partial, incomplete; not intentionally so, but from a want of carefully considering the fresh obligations revealed to them during their past Christian experience, or else from the actual want of knowledge of such obligations.

All men, therefore, are not to be indiscriminately blamed for not enjoying perfect love. They are to be blamed for not seeking it, because all Christians are commanded to go on to perfection. But a certain amount of knowledge, after conversion, is necessary to its attainment. As we seek the blessing we gain the knowledge, until faith grasps the prize, and the Holy Spirit testifies to the completion of the work. We consecrate ourselves again and again, expecting each time we do so that our faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, will behold the sacrifice accepted, and our hearts purified. Thus is fulfilled the saying of Scripture, "sanctified by faith," not by

consecration, until faith reveals its fullness; and "sanctified by the Holy Ghost," as the efficient agent, answering to the faith which we exercise. The question whether perfect love is a gradual or instantaneous work is thus settled. Our progress toward it is gradual, but *it must be expected instantaneously*, and is wrought within us instantaneously, just as the forgiveness of our sins is expected and wrought in us. We must expect it at once or we shall never obtain it. We must look for it the very instant that we are praying, just as Columbus looked momentarily and earnestly, from the deck of his tempest-tossed vessel, for the western continent he was seeking. In the midst of a mutinous crew who threatened to turn about his ship's prow and render all his previous labor useless, with intense longing his eyes sought the land, and, as he suddenly caught a glimpse of it, transported with joy, he named it San Salvador—Holy Saviour. So when we are able by faith to see a holy Saviour and appropriate not only his merits, but his strength, we gain the victory, and the work is accomplished. Looking for it, expecting it

every instant, as we pray, our approach to it is a gradual work, but there is a moment when we receive it—a moment in which our souls are fully sanctified.

*Sanctification* is, therefore, gradual. It is going on all the time that we are alive to God. But *entire* sanctification, like the voice to Elijah or the sound from heaven on the day of pentecost, whether it come as a rushing, mighty wind, or in the still, small voice, is effected at a point of time which will be memorable in our history throughout all the ages of eternity.

At the time of our conversion we give up all to Christ, as far as we know. But God, in his loving-kindness, does not show us the full extent of the sacrifice which his law requires. If he did so, a sinner who is without love to warm his heart would shrink from an assumption of the task. We learn afterward, as love to Christ increases and our spiritual powers grow stronger, that his commandment is exceeding broad. It was so with our Lord's disciples. After he had told them that the Comforter should come, and should reprove

the world, that is, unconverted men, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, there was something that the same Spirit was to do also for them. He said to *them*, to those who already loved him, who had enjoyed his teaching for years, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but *ye cannot bear them now*. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, *he will guide you into all truth*." That Spirit, already with them in his ordinary offices, showed them, during those well-nigh fifty days which elapsed between the resurrection and the day of pentecost, their relations to Christ and to the world at a time when they were beginning to live for him without his constant, personal presence, and, after a comprehensive, complete consecration had been made by them in accordance with such knowledge, the sanctifying power of the same Spirit entered their souls on the day of pentecost, and they were filled with perfect love. He came then with more energy than in those convicting, enlightening, converting, sanctifying influences which were experienced by every child of God under the Old Testament

dispensation. He came at the day of pentecost to touch their lips with holy fire, of which the cloven tongues were emblems, and to enlighten their minds as to "all truth," which it was necessary for them to understand in order to preach the Gospel and to live fully for him.

This baptism of pentecost could not have been their conversion. This must have taken place before Christ died. How could it have been otherwise? He himself had associated with them for three years and a half; had called them his disciples, his friends, his brethren, and had even sent them out to preach. All this precludes the idea that they were yet in their sins. Neither could they have been fully sanctified before the death of Jesus, because perfect love casteth out fear. This fullness of love they could not then have possessed, for when he was taken in the garden they all forsook him and fled. The much-loved John stood by, a tame witness of the mocking and scourging of his Lord, and looked up silently as he writhed upon the cross. The blows of the hammer, while the nails pierced his hands and feet, produced no expostulation

as far as we can learn. When we think of John afterward, in the wondrous visions of Patmos, we feel the least he could have done would have been to cast himself upon the cross as they nailed Jesus to it, and to ask to suffer in his stead. He was just in the condition in which too many have found themselves, paralyzed by the fear of man. Peter, bold Peter, who said he would die for him, who drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus in the first transport of righteous indignation, when he found himself in the midst of the crowd who were clamoring for the blood of Jesus, quailed before the high-priest's maid-servant, and swore that he did not know Christ.

Now look at these same men after their renewed consecration—after they had received the pentecostal fire. They stood in the Jewish temple, and boldly preached Christ until they were arrested and cast into prison. The next morning they were brought before Annas and Caiaphas, the very men who had condemned Jesus, and Peter rose up and boldly charged them with his death.

“Whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead. . . . This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” And when they were publicly whipped for preaching Christ, they departed from a scene which had branded them with eternal infamy in the eyes of the world, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

## CHAPTER V.

## LIFE CONSECRATED.

“**I**F I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.” And they never flinched from this determination after the day of pentecost. That Peter faltered in his decision previously to his being endued with power from on high, does not show that the Saviour required any less consecration than the consecration of the life, but that Peter lacked Divine strength. Christ requires of us a readiness at any moment to lay down our lives for him—to die as the martyrs died, if it please him to call us thus to suffer—to die by contagious disease if, in the performance of some duty to a suffering neighbor, we should contract it—to die in the defense of our country, neighbors, or families if it should become necessary. This is the point we are dwelling on now, and not on the consecration



of time or the dedication of our future years to labor for God.

“In the village of Ragenbach, one afternoon, a company of people sat conversing together, among whom was the village blacksmith, a strong and vigorous man. All at once the door sprung open, and a large dog came staggering into the room—a great, strong, powerful beast, with a ferocious, frightful aspect. His head was hanging down, and his eyes bloodshot, his red-colored tongue hanging half way out of his mouth, and his tail dropped between his legs. Thus the ferocious beast entered the room, out of which there was no escape but by one door. Scarcely had the smith’s neighbors seen the animal when they sprung up and exclaimed, ‘The dog is mad!’

“Then arose an outcry! The room was full of men and women, and the foaming beast stood before the only entrance; no one could leave without passing him. He snapped savagely right and left. All rose up and shrunk from the furious dog with agonizing countenances. Who should deliver them from him? The smith stood among them, and as he saw

the anguish of the people it flashed across his mind how many of his happy and contented neighbors would be made miserable by the dog, and he formed a resolution, the like of which is scarcely to be found in the history of the human race for high-mindedness and nobleness. Certainly his brown cheek paled a little, but his eyes sparkled with Divine fire, and an elevated resolution shone from the smooth brow of the simple-minded man.

“‘Back, all!’ thundered he, with his deep, strong voice. ‘One victim must fall in order to save all, and I will be that victim; I will hold him, and while I do so make your escape.’ The smith had scarcely spoken these words when the dog started toward the shrieking people. But he went not far. ‘With God’s help!’ cried the smith, and he rushed upon the foaming brute, seized him with an iron grasp, and dashed him to the floor.

“O, what a terrible struggle followed! The dog bit furiously on every side in a most frightful manner. His long teeth tore the arms of the heroic smith, but he would not let him loose. Regardless alike of the ex-

cessive pain, and the horrible death which must ensue, he held down, with an iron grasp, the snapping, biting, howling brute, until all had escaped, till all were rescued and in safety. He then flung the half-strangled beast from him against the wall, and, dripping with blood and venomous foam, he left the room, locking the door after him. Some persons shot the dog through the windows. But what will become of the brave, unfortunate smith?

“Weeping and lamenting, the people surround him who had saved their lives at the expense of his own. ‘Be quiet, my friends, do not weep for me, for I have only performed my duty. When I am dead think of me with love, and now pray for me that God will not let me suffer long or too much. I will take care that no further mischief shall occur through me, for I must certainly become mad.’ He went straight to his workshop and selected a long chain, the heaviest and firmest from his whole stock. He then, with his own hands, welded it upon his own limbs and around the anvil so firmly that no power on earth could break it. ‘There,’ said he, ‘it’s

done,' after silently and solemnly completing the work. 'Now you are secure, I am inoffensive. So long as I live bring me my food. The rest I leave to God ; into his hands I commend my spirit.' Nothing could save the brave smith ; neither tears, lamentations, nor prayers. Madness seized him, and after nine days he died ; but truly he died only to awake to a more beautiful and glorious life at the right hand of God. He died, but his memory will live from generation to generation, and will be venerated to the end of time.

"Search history through, and you will find no action more glorious and sublime than the deed of this simple-minded man, the smith of Ragenbach. It is easy for noble minds to die, like Martius Curtius, the high-spirited Roman youth ; but to go to the sacrifice with the certainty of death, and, moreover, to wait a death so awful during long, fearful hours and days, that is to die not once, but a thousand times."

He was a hero, but only carried out the simple precepts of Christianity. Centuries ago, and long after the establishment of Christianity, the gladiator fought his fellow-men in the

arena of queenly Rome, and hundreds, thousands of victims were thus "butchered to make a Roman holiday." In the other chief cities of the empire these spectacles were no less frequent, and formed the national amusement of the people. Fair women sat in the crowded theater, and applauded or frowned as the life-blood of one or the other combatant stained the ground. We are told that one heroic man gave his life for the nation about the beginning of the fifth century, and caused a suppression throughout the whole empire of the cruel sport. On a certain day, while the barbarous spectacle was in progress at Rome, the audience beheld a rough, coarsely-dressed man spring into the arena and thrust himself between the combatants, trying to force them to desist. The rage of the people knew no bounds at the interruption. The gladiators themselves, whom he had commiserated, cut at the defenseless intruder with their swords, "and the spectators overwhelmed him with a shower of stones. When he was dead they began to ask who he was. The natural revulsion of feeling followed lawless violence, and

when they saw by his dress that he was a man of God, a superstitious dread of the consequences of such rash conduct took possession of them. All that could be ascertained about him was, that he had come from Asia, that his name was Telemachus—some said Alymachus—and that, horrified at the spectacle which crowned the festivities of a Roman gala day, he had resolved to stop the games or die in the attempt. Emperor and people were deeply impressed by the self-sacrifice of the man; for the kind of bravery which the gladiatorial games fostered was a very different thing from this Christian self-sacrifice; it was hardness, not heroism. And so the poor, unknown stranger, from the wilds of Asia, did what no emperor had ventured to do before him; he stopped the games, for the public feeling was so strong in reference to his death that, when an edict was issued forbidding such conflicts, it met with no opposition. There was never another fight of gladiators at Rome, and the custom was speedily abolished throughout the empire.” Thus one man who gave his life for his fellow-men did what, perhaps, nothing else

would have done. We are not called to put our lives in jeopardy by such a test, but there are other tests for us. What multitudes died for their country in her late struggle! What multitudes have lost their lives in heroic endeavors to save others in peril by shipwreck, by fire, by sickness, and otherwise! And who can tell how many of these were influenced by true Christian principle?

This is the love of which Christ speaks when he says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." How often this precept is perverted, and cited, as if it meant simply to love one another without specifying the degree of love! How often it is mutilated by quoting the first part and leaving out the second! Why, it is not a new commandment at all, and never was, if it only means to love each other. Heathen sages told their disciples to do so long before Jesus came. But it is new in its degree of love. Christ commands us to love each other *as he loved us*; to hold our lives in our hands, ready to give them up for our brethren if necessary;

ready, therefore, to sacrifice all lesser interests, such as feelings and personal animosities, for his dear sake.

St. John, who drank so deeply into the Saviour's spirit, takes up this subject, and says: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God," whether he may have attained to perfect love or not. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another," in that same degree which is expressed in the sixteenth verse of the preceding chapter: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." What a cure for hard feelings, coldness, and discord in every Church it would be if the brethren were thus ready to



lay down their lives for each other! What a power each Church would possess if all its members obeyed the Saviour's new commandment! In this very way St. John approaches the doctrine of perfect love.

"Beloved, if God *so* loved us," without seeing any thing lovable in us, we are to love our brethren irrespective of their worth and their feelings toward us. We love for God's sake, and then, in the language of an eminent commentator, "no unkind carriage of a brother would induce us to withdraw our love from him: for if it have God for its motive and model, it will never fail."

"No man hath seen God at any time," so as to behold the greatness of his love, but Christ has revealed it, and "if we love another" thus, "God dwelleth in us, and his love is *perfected* in us," and "hereby know we that we dwell" thus "in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" to testify with ours when the work is completed. "Herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment," and "perfect love casteth out fear."

## CHAPTER VI.

## FEELINGS CONSECRATED.

WE choose to employ the word "feelings" as expressive of the emotions of our heart, because it conveys in a popular sense our meaning. When our feelings are engaged, what we do for God we do heartily, gladly, unreluctantly, and not under a mere sense of duty. We suppose the apostle had some such idea as this in view when he said, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, (love,) it profiteth me nothing." A man might spend his fortune in doing good, and close his life at the stake, under a sense of duty, as, no doubt, many heathens have done, without the warm feeling of love to God. We do not mean, however, that we are to neglect duty because we think we have no feeling. Many a Christian, in whose heart the fires of God's love are slumbering, in attempting to bear some cross, finds that the flames break

out as he proceeds, and when it is performed his whole soul is aglow. Until we reach the state of perfect love, and even then, sometimes, we must often lean on a sense of duty in undertaking Christian work. But, when undertaken, if there is feeling in the heart, it will generally awake to spur us on. Whether it do so or not we must act, until the time comes when love shall fill the heart. There will always be the yoke to bear and the burden to carry, but, as we have already said, when Christ has given us perfect rest, the yoke will be easy and the burden light. The discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church has carefully guarded this point when it says that we are to trample under foot the enthusiastic doctrine that we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to do it. Neither do we mean that we should rely upon feeling as a guide to Christian duty, but simply that in what or whom we like or dislike we may consecrate ourselves to Christ, and ask in earnest prayer that the Spirit of the omnipotent God shall breathe upon our feelings and mold them into conformity with his own.

It may be said that if the will of the Christian be consecrated, it includes the feelings. Of course this is a manifest truism. Not only is it such, but if the will be given to God, every thing else that we can name is given,—the whole is given. But the difficulty is, to see clearly what, and how much, the will includes, and this is the very point at which we are aiming. The sinner gives his will to Christ when he is converted, as far as he has light, and we are trying to throw light on all that hangs upon the will.

It is hard for us to love what we naturally hate. It is hard for us to hate what we naturally love. We have often felt it a difficult task to love those who were constantly ill-treating and maligning us, and have struggled hard to hate the unlawful pleasures which tempt us, or the intoxicating cup which inebriates us. But there is a power which can make a complete change in all our feelings. He who created the soul, with all its wondrous faculties, can not only forgive, but so completely change it that every feeling will be right. Perhaps the very last step of this vic-

tory is when we find our feelings warm and tender as injuries are heaped upon us. Perhaps the very next step may be the entrance into perfect love. So it would appear from what our Saviour says in his sermon on the mount. That chapter concludes with the words: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

As a preparation for this state of grace, he says:—

"Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat," if it be a small matter which neither involves your own serious interests nor those of your family, such as a coat or cloak, "let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away," wherever a paramount duty does not forbid it. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse

you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you ; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven : for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye ? do not even the publicans the same ? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others ? do not even the publicans so ? ”

The next step to this is perfect love, for the Saviour immediately adds : “ Be ye therefore perfect.”

There is no more beautiful illustration of this doctrine in all the literature of Christianity than that given by Jesus himself. After the Jews had nailed him to the cross, as it lay stretched upon the ground, and just as they elevated it, his hands and feet feeling the first agonizing strain of his own weight—at this very moment, if we read the account of Luke correctly, he cried, “ Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do.”

When our feelings toward others are thus

consecrated, accepted, sanctified, the exhibition of such a state of grace forms one of the most effective arguments in favor of Christianity. Its possessor holds a power over the opposers of religion which is irresistible.

A young minister was making a visit to one of the members of his Church who was confined to her bed by sickness. Her husband was in the room, and without any provocation he commenced against the preacher a tirade of abuse, in which was mingled offensive names and the most insulting epithets. The young man said nothing, listened without betraying the least resentment, and then bowed down and prayed for the suffering woman and her then silent husband. Only a few weeks afterward he was sent for on behalf of the reviler, whom he found with his head bowed on the table in bitter mourning for his sins, but especially the sin of having causelessly uttered the vile words to which we have referred. It was early in the morning, and such was the acuteness of his convictions of wrong that he had passed a sleepless night, and could not rest until he had made all the amends he was able

to make by an apology to the minister. He sought earnestly peace with God, and in a short time professed conversion. Here was the effect of the power of long-suffering patience.

At a camp-meeting, while sinners were coming forward to the altar, a young lady was asked by a clergyman to present herself thus as a seeker of salvation. A gentleman, who was near, and who proved to be her brother-in-law, advanced with a haughty look and imperious gesture, saying, "Let her alone, sir; you have no business to speak to or meddle with my sister."

The clergyman did not walk away coldly, much less did he offer to urge the young lady further, but turned kindly toward the opposer, and, with flowing tears, begged *him* to yield his heart to Christ, explaining to him his need of a Saviour, and ended by urging the haughty man to go himself to the altar of prayer. He did not go, but anger speedily disappeared from his countenance, and as they parted, each shook cordially the other's hand with almost a promise on the young man's part to become a



Christian. A few weeks only had elapsed, when, in a crowded assembly, that same clergyman baptized that haughty man and his wife, and received them into the Church of God. Family prayer, which was immediately established by him, and other unmistakable fruits of a new heart, gave evidence that his conversion was genuine.

Many of us are familiar with the circumstance of the slave whose blood so often flowed under the lash of a cruel master, but who, with a Christ-like spirit, persevered, in meekness and long-suffering, until the hard heart of his persecutor was softened, and he became a follower of that Saviour who bestowed such grace upon the humble bondsman. The fact is, that he whose feelings are thus consecrated and sanctified by the Spirit of God, as he suffers persecution for the Saviour, has in his hands a weapon stronger than logic to disarm and to convince his enemy. May we not even suppose that when Stephen died so gloriously, looking up to the opened heavens, beneath the stones of the infuriate Jews, praying with his last words, "Lord, lay not this sin to their

charge," the first seeds of his subsequent grand career were sown in the heart of that young man at whose feet the martyr's clothes were laid, as he witnessed the patience, the love, of the dying minister of Christ? That young man's name was Saul. He was afterward the Apostle Paul. O Christian brother, if you cannot cordially forgive and love your erring brother in the Church, or in the world, you need a consecration of your feelings to Him who can impress upon them his own likeness, as it was exhibited on the cross, and that of Stephen as he fell beneath the blows of the angry Jewish people.

## CHAPTER VII.

## TIME CONSECRATED

THERE was a remarkable sentence penned by Charlotte Corday shortly after she assassinated the infamous Marat, and only a day or two before she died by the guillotine, "I have never esteemed life save for its utility." This is the true estimate, and we might denominate this chapter "Life Consecrated" if it were not that we have considered under that head a willingness to die for Christ, and that future time given to us on earth seems to express more directly our idea. By "Time Consecrated" we mean every year, every month, every day, every moment of our stay here devoted to usefulness, the intention being thus to serve God. It is expressed in scriptural language by the phrase, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." On the Sabbath we go to his sanctuary, that we may do something to advance his cause, either by receiving good ourselves, or by setting an example to

others. We pray in private that we may advance his glory by becoming more fitted for his work. We commence Monday morning by laboring for the food which shall prolong our lives so that we may do something for Christ, or to support our families, that they may advance his glory, and that our children may stand in our places in the same work. We watch carefully our constitution that we may not overtask it with labor in order that our lives may be prolonged for his service. We study the means of health and recreation that we may keep the beautiful frame which God has given us in proper working order. If a Christian is worth any thing to the world, it is his sacred duty to prolong his life to the utmost limit of usefulness, that he may do the most he can for Christ. Hence he who overtaxes his brain or his physical powers knowingly is committing suicide, and not doing all things to the glory of God. How many thousands of men in business have died prematurely, simply because they lacked a conscience as to the mode of using time! How many ministers, instead of adopting the rule of doing all

things for the glory of God, have blinded their eyes to hygienic principles, and cut short their days by an effort to do too much !

It is the motive which decides the moral quality of our actions. A man's life may be a useful one to others in many respects, and be at the same time a sinful one in the sight of God. If the eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light ; but if the eye be evil, the whole body is full of darkness. When a man is converted, he devotes his time unreservedly to God, but does not generally enter into particulars as to the mode in which this is to be done. It is not long after he finds peace, if his soul shall continue in a healthful state, that the question comes up, "How shall I do most for God in the years which he may give me on earth?" With many a man one of the first things which conscience suggests is, "Am I called to preach?" Our Saviour's command to all is unconditional, "Go, preach the Gospel."

Now, while we can preach the Gospel in every trade, profession, and business, the most comprehensive mode is from the sacred desk.

united with private, personal appeals to each individual man. The question is not simply, "Am I called to the ministry?" but, "Am I as a Christian called to preach in some way, excused from the most effective, the highest mode of preaching, and what are the reasons why I am not bound to preach in the fullest sense?" Every man must decide this candidly, conscientiously, in the sight of God. It has an intimate connection with the whole history of his future life, as well as with his eternal destiny. Its decision may change all his relations in life, and send him forth to new scenes and even to distant shores. If he shall decide in the affirmative, he is not to wait until he is thrust out by the Church, for the Church may not be attentive to his individual case; but reveal his convictions with frankness to the authorities in that particular branch of God's people with whom he may be connected, that he may thus put himself in the way of a call from them as well as from God himself.

If, on the contrary, he shall decide that he is excused from preaching as a public teacher, then he is to decide the question, in what

business, trade, or profession he can accomplish most for God ; or being already in a lawful business, trade, or profession, how he can carry it on to advance most his Redeemer's kingdom. We knew a brother in a large western city, a member of the Church, an earnest, humble Christian. His trade was that of a journeyman carpenter. By degrees he became the employer of other men, and the head of a workshop of his own. Here he found that his increased cares caused increased thought, and he began to imagine that this prevented him from enjoying as close a communion with God as he had once enjoyed. He, therefore, dismissed his hands, so we were informed, returned to the work of a simple journeyman, under the false impression that as such he could more acceptably serve God. We need hardly say that he made a grave mistake. He had, in his position as master, acquired influence over others, and that influence, used for Christ, opened to him a means of usefulness which he did not otherwise possess. He had also acquired the power to obtain more material substance, which he could devote to God.

These two talents, influence and money, were not thus to be thrown away.

But whether man or woman, young or old, the renewed consecration is simply, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The whole motive of life being changed, we no longer live for ourselves but for Christ. There is a complete turning away from our own selfish purposes and gratifications, and a determination to spend every year, day, and moment for God.

It is not the question whether this or that action or way of spending our time be wrong, but which course of action will be more for the glory of God than an opposite course. Here comes up at once the question of amusements, which a man may decide, as we have already hinted, by the inquiry as to what recreation is necessary to keep in order his bodily frame. He is sacredly bound to keep this in good health as far as possible, that his life may be prolonged for usefulness in Christ's kingdom. It is a sin to neglect this. Every recreation, therefore, promoting this object, which is not evil—which does not encourage,



and which has not the appearance of evil, and may thus wound the conscience of weaker brethren, is lawful and right. There are no neutral actions, for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." O! how precious is the rest for the soul when we feel that we are doing all things, as far as we know, for the glory of our Redeemer, Christ.

What a perfect guide we have in this consecration of our time to the glory of God when we come to the means of grace! We need not speak of private devotion. What Christian would ever rise in the morning, or retire at night, without earnest prayer on his knees to God! We need not speak of the daily study of the sacred volume, or of family prayer, or a regular attendance on God's sanctuary. He that needs to be reminded of these things does not need to be urged to go on to perfection, but to lay again the foundation of the first principles of religion. Let us come to those means of grace which are neglected by so many with slight or no compunction of conscience. The appointed evening for the prayer or class meeting arrives. Governed by the

motive we speak of, that every moment of your time belongs to God, as well as every thing else, you are called upon to decide, not if it be wrong to stay away, but which will glorify your Father in heaven most, to go or not to go. Can I do more good in the encouraging of my pastor and brethren by being at my appointed place, or by remaining in my house? Sometimes you may conscientiously decide on the latter. The state of your health or that of your family may render it more in accordance with the Divine will that you should omit that particular occasion. But if we should all put the matter on the simple ground we have stated, which is the only scriptural basis, how our social meetings would be thronged, and what pentecostal showers would come upon the Church! Besides, when you have decided conscientiously, your motive being right, if you stay at home for the glory of God, it brings no condemnation on your soul. When we feel that all our time is devoted to God in some way, and not to our own mere enjoyment, it becomes an easy matter to be faithful. We recollect a Christian woman, on a Wednesday

afternoon, was entertaining some visitors who had called on her. As the afternoon wore away she retired from the room, and in a few minutes returned with her hat and shawl. "I hope," said she, "you will excuse me for an hour. It is the day of my class." She left her visitors, and when the social meeting was over returned to enjoy their society.

In Bangor, Maine, there was a lady, some years ago, and she may be there still, who, whenever she was obliged to be absent from the appointed means of grace, sent her experience in writing. One who had been a member of the Wesleyan Church forty-two years said that she had only once willfully neglected her class-meeting during that whole period. Upon inquiry she gave the following answer as to that particular time:—

"It was years ago, when I was single at home. We had a very large wash, and myself and sisters did the ironing, as most young people did then. The class-meeting happened to come on the ironing-day, in the afternoon, and, as we had a mile and a half to walk, we thought it would be a tiresome interrup-

tion to go, and would hinder us from two o'clock till five, just the best part of the day; therefore we all agreed to miss it for once, and go on with our ironing.

"As soon as it was too late, we felt we had done wrong, and at the end of the week we were not so forward with our work as usual. We saw that no time had been gained, and we all resolved never to do such a thing again, but to make every thing give way to the cause of God and religion. From that day no work or business ever kept us from the house of God."

A young man, shortly after he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, concluded, as the evening approached on which his class-meeting was held, to remain at home. He had a mile to walk in order to reach the place, and, fatigued with the duties of the day, he thought it would be a small matter to be absent only once. Then he reasoned, "This is *once*; it may be the first step in a course of backsliding. I will not run the risk of *one* neglect of duty." He went, and now, after a score of years, looks back upon that evening as a momentous period in his history.

It is not all, however, to *attend* the class-meeting or the prayer-meeting. There are times, especially in revival services, when the people of God seem to be marshaled like soldiers in a battle. At such seasons there are brethren and sisters (the latter have become extinct in some Churches) on whom the minister can rely before the congregation to fill up every moment of time by prayer, exhortation, and singing. He knows they will come to the front and do their part without a moment's delay. There is no faltering, no waiting to get ready. It is too late for a soldier to load and prime his musket when he comes face to face with the enemy. But the number of these brethren is comparatively small. The great majority of the Church, like Madame Diffidence, the spouse of Giant Despair, in Bunyan's Pilgrim, have such an excess of modesty that they speak only when they feel like it. They pray when they feel like it; and the very time they are needed, when the church is full or the meeting likely to drag, they do not feel like praying or speaking at all. If the pastor attempts to lean on them to

carry on a meeting, he is leaning on a broken staff. Like Peter before the servant-maid, they are paralyzed before a congregation of sinners. They need a renewed consecration to God—a consecration which will bind them with the sacredness of an oath never to fail in giving their testimony for Christ, or in lifting up their voice in prayer, when the occasion is suitable. We remember the resolution of one devoted woman, as she declared it publicly. It was this:—

“I decided,” said she, “many years ago that I never would allow a proper opportunity to pass without giving a testimony for God.” How can we ever expect Christ to say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” unless we are ourselves trying to be faithful in all things?

We said our time belonged to Christ. Blessed thought, that it can be used for him in a way that is imperishable! Joyous prospect, that the effect of this use will be apparent in the heavenly world! Look at this principle in laboring for Christ by the way-side, in the parlor, in the store, in the workshop,

wherever we can find a man to whom we can speak of Jesus. Not the minister alone, not the public preacher alone, but the humble Christian every-where, by using his time for the glory of God may win souls. And while we speak his name, our hearts will burn more and more with celestial fire until it will be an actual cross to keep silent. "He that winneth souls is wise." How wise is he, then, who will make that renewed consecration of his time which will prepare him for this work! The first impulse of the newly-born soul is to win souls. His first spiritual breath is a wish for the conversion of some friend. This wish is a Heaven-bestowed gift. The reason why so many are cold, indifferent, and dead in this work, is because the desire is quenched instead of being cultivated and improved.

Living thus for the glory of God, the yoke becomes easy and the burden light. We learn the full significance of the words, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THOUGHT CONSECRATED.

SOME one will ask, "Is it possible that we can be entirely pure in thought at all times?" The Saviour says, "Blessed are the pure in heart," and he certainly means that our thoughts shall be pure, "for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." If the source be purified, that which proceeds from it must partake of a like character. But it is so far beyond our conception that it seems sometimes impossible. It would be impossible if it were to be done by ourselves, but if God is omnipotent he can do it, and he has said, "The Lord thy God *will* circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with *all* thine heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Here, then, is evidently intended direct action on the part of God, coupled with this condition: "If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God to keep his commandments and his stat-



utes, which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the Lord with all thine heart and with all thy soul."

He says again, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be *clean* from *all* your filthiness, and from *all* your idols will I *cleanse* you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. *And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.* I will also save you from *all* your uncleannesses." Here, again, is the direct action of God upon the soul. And shall we say that he who can by a breath destroy or make alive, in whose hand are the spirits of all flesh, to mold them, as clay in the hands of the potter—shall we say that he cannot make our thoughts perfectly pure? But *will* he do it? It would be a miracle. Will he do it, do you ask? Why, he says he will, as clearly as words can express it, whether it be a miracle or not. Suppose it is a miracle; is not every sinner's conversion just as much a miracle? Are not a thousand answers to prayer mira-

cles? Is it not preposterous to say, and granting to our enemies the whole gist of what we maintain as to God's direct agency in the world, that the age of miracles is past when we see them occurring all around us? Has not many a Christian, as his prayer came before the throne, seen an Omnipotent Hand interposing in his favor as clearly as ever Elijah saw the fire descend? Let the materialists bind down their god to an eternal obedience of physical law. Let them behold him, cold in the heavens, chained by a destiny which forbids the displacement of a single atom of matter. But "their rock is not as our Rock," who sees the sparrow as it falls, and numbers the hairs of our heads; whose physical laws of the universe are but instruments to subserve his great moral purposes; and who, to save a single soul from destruction, would arrest, as he did once, the sun and moon in their course. This Almighty Being can do with the soul just as he pleases. He can make it pure in an instant of time, and it is his will to do so.

Has he not said again, "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel

after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts?" Does not this mean the very thoughts of our hearts? And does it not mean that God will exert within us his own supernatural agency to accomplish the work?

But how shall we consecrate our thoughts that this glorious effect may be produced in our souls? How must we yield them up so that a willing and an all-powerful God shall make them pure? In the same way in which we have described the dedication of our time. We must decide that thought shall be employed for the glory of God. Our thinking powers must be devoted to his cause. The great conquerors of the world *thought* for their own glory. All that they planned was to glorify themselves. The man who is seeking wealth as his chief aim, *thinks* of it night and day. He devises means by which he may add to his store. His thought-power is exhausted in this aim. But he who would serve God fully, determines to use this faculty for higher purposes, and thinks, plans, contrives, how he may do something for Christ. He consecrates this

power of his mind to the Saviour. Who knows how much has been accomplished for the good of the world by such a consecration? May we not expect that, when it is made, God will not only sanctify our thoughts, but direct and elevate them so that they may become effective in bringing to pass what we desire? Who will say that Columbus had not devoted this power to God when he planned the discovery of America? Who will assert that the thoughts of Gutenberg, Newton, Washington, Howard, Watts, Morse, were not consecrated, and then inspired, by the Holy Spirit?

An author may give this power of thought to the composition of some work in which he aims at the good of the world. An inventor, instead of seeking personal aggrandizement as his main object, may think for Christ. A merchant may consecrate his ingenuity and astuteness in business. As the author thinks, as the inventor thinks, and as the merchant thinks, their sanctified thoughts will spread out in various directions to benefit the world. We hear of one merchant who, when he sent off boxes of merchandise, in every box placed

tracts and religious books; of another who posted up the placard in his store, "No swearing allowed here;" of another who prepared a reading-room for his clerks; of another who established a public library; of another who built a church; all showing that they were thinking for Christ. How many great and glorious enterprises, such as the Bible and missionary societies, hospitals, orphanages, and institutions of learning, have had their origin in this thinking for God! Worldly men effect prodigious results by active thought, and so likewise have many Christians. But, alas! how few, comparatively, have dedicated this power to the glory of God.

It is not that we are to think of God all the time, but the aim, the ultimate result, is to advance his cause. A Livingstone became world-renowned as he traversed Africa. He revealed to us a new world in the bosom of that continent, but his aim was to open it to the Gospel. A few hundred Spaniards conquered the Aztec kingdom. They were stern and fearless soldiers, but their aim was, so they asserted, to open Mexico to the Christian re-

ligion. Whether this was, in fact, their real object or not does not destroy the force of the illustration.

When Wesley devoted his thought-power to God—his power to organize, his power as an author, as a preacher—what a result followed the consecration! How many young men have in them the eloquence of a Whitefield, a Summerfield, a Maffit, or a Gough, if thought was consecrated to Christ! Can we ever expect to be pure in heart, then, until this is given back to Him who bestowed it upon us? Can we hope that He will hallow it until we deliberately lay upon his altar our powers of devising, planning, contriving, inventing, discovering—our ingenuity in business, our logic in argument, all, all that mind can conceive of, to be used, either immediately or remotely, to advance God's kingdom? When this is done then may we ask, with confident faith in the words of our own communion service, as well as that of the Episcopal prayer-book, "Cleanse the *thoughts* of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name."

## CHAPTER IX.

## WORDS CONSECRATED.

OUR words are devoted to Christ. If we must give account before the throne of God for every idle word, shall we go on increasing the dark catalogue, so soon to confront us when we stand before the judgment seat?

In avoiding idle words, our Saviour does not mean that we shall always talk about religion, but that our motive in all we say shall be to use the wondrous faculty of vocal expression which he has given us for his glory. He did not mean that we should be gloomy, reserved, uncommunicative, afraid to open our lips, lest we should say something wrong, but that the intention of our lives should be by our words to please him and advance his kingdom. So far removed from the state of gloomy Christians does he desire us to be, that it is his wish we should be happy and joyous, commanding us always to rejoice, and saying that

the joy of the Lord is our strength. A professor of religion living, or rather trying to live, half way between the world and God, may be heavy and taciturn because he does not know where he stands, and is afraid of stumbling at every step ; but the joyous, buoyant Christian, walking in the light of God's countenance, feels that he has a sure guide in the motive which actuates him, and knows that his words are hallowed by the pure intention which prompts them.

A pleasant, agreeable conversation often recommends religion, and opens the way effectually for the introduction of the Saviour. We carry this idea into our social visits, though we may not name the subject at the time at all. We call upon our friends for the very purpose of doing something for Christ ; it may be only to show a neighbor or friend that we wish to be courteous. We feel that it would be derogatory to our Master if we, as his representatives, should be otherwise. This motive governing us will prevent us from falling into scandal and evil-speaking, will give us power to say nothing of an absent person, un-



less it be something in his favor. This motive will prevent us from falling into "lightness, jesting, and foolish talking," as our Discipline expresses it, and of telling ridiculous stories to glorify ourselves instead of God. How many ministers have thus stained an otherwise unsullied name! Taking advantage of their position in society to gain the ear of the people, the staple of their conversation is worn-out, threadbare jokes and foolish stories. Why, if such men were not ministers and did not thus command a hearing and gain an access to Christian homes, many a father and mother would not admit them to the bosom of their families, or allow them to retail their facetious nonsense in the presence of their children. It has been well said of these ministers that they should never have gone into the pulpit, or, being there, they should never have come out of it. We knew a minister who labored in the same church in which we were then stationed, several, perhaps twenty, years before us. Through all these years his reputation, as a story-teller, lived in the memory of the people. Some of their remarks it was impossi-

ble not to hear. One said, "A good preacher, but he ought never to have been a minister." Another, "He would have made a good hotel-keeper." It is right to tell stories when they are intended to minister grace to the hearers, or illustrate or impress any truth in the religious or secular world; but it is not justice to our own dignity as Christians or ministers, or justice to the cause we represent, to play the part of a buffoon.

His words thus consecrated, the Christian prepares the way, by a well-ordered conversation, to labor for Christ, and will speak on proper occasions directly for him. It is precisely from this point that St. Paul draws us upward toward the prayer for perfect love. His remarks are directed not to ministers, but to the members of the early Church of Thessalonica. He says, "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak." Warn sinners and disobedient brethren by speaking to them of Christ and of a judgment to come; tell the feeble and weak of a Saviour's love, of a Saviour's willingness to help, and as

in all active work for the Master we must expect persecution, "be patient toward all men." Here is the ordinary Christian's work, exhorting, warning, comforting as he mingles with his brethren and the world. "See that none render evil for evil unto any man." Under every circumstance, however man may treat or mock you, or sneer at your efforts to save souls, "ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men." "Rejoice evermore." There is nothing in the world that will so fill the heart with joy as this employment. Go out and call upon some of your neighbors, the poor as well as the rich, and tell them of Jesus, and you will come back with a joyous, happy heart. "Pray without ceasing," that your labors may be blessed. "In every thing give thanks," not taking any praise to yourself for what you have done, but thanking God for the inestimable privilege of laboring for him. "Quench not the Spirit," by neglecting to engage in the same work again, or by neglecting in the social meetings of your brethren to declare what God is doing for you and what you are doing for him.

“Despise not prophesyings.” In these meetings and in the public sanctuary, as you grow in grace and come nearer to the Saviour by such work for him, you will hear exhortations of brethren and sermons of ministers lacking in the earnestness, power, and spiritual life to which you have attained ; deficient, perhaps, in their elucidation and presentation of that holiness of heart you have now begun to seek, but of which they have not yet received so clear a conception ; and as you hear you will wish that they would press the Church more earnestly up toward full salvation, but despise not their words ; they are intended for all classes of hearers, and what may not suit you may benefit some one else. “Prove all things.” Try by the Scriptures what they say, and without making light of any thing in which they possibly err, for that would injure their influence, whatever will benefit you apply to your heart and “hold fast that which is good.” “Abstain from all appearance of evil ;” not only avoid in the most minute particulars every thing that is evil, but abstain from what would appear to be so to another who knows

not your motives, and then you may expect an answer to the prayer which follows:—

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly”—yes, wholly, thought, time, feelings, life, words, your whole being. But can we retain this blessing? Can we keep it as we go out into the world and mingle with men? To answer this very objection the apostle adds: “And I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul, and body be *preserved blameless* unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” But will God do this great work in such sinful, erring hearts as ours? “Faithful is he that calleth you *who also will do it.*” He who is faithful to keep his promises has called us to this state of grace, has promised its accomplishment, and he will not fail in performing it.

Shall we begin at once, then, by warning unawakened sinners and lukewarm Church members, and comforting the awakened, by pointing them to the Saviour, and thus consecrate our words to Christ? Shall we, from this hour, render an obedience which we have solemnly undertaken to the rules of our Church by doing good to men’s souls, instructing,

reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with? It is related of Bishop Asbury, and this is but an illustration of the mode in which he labored for God as he traveled for thousands of miles through the country, that in riding along a river his eyes fell upon a poor, half-intoxicated negro, who was seated on the bank fishing. Addressing him, and finding that he was ignorant of the most rudimentary knowledge of salvation, he dismounted from his horse, sat down by his side, and in an extended conversation explained to him his need of salvation, the atonement of Christ, and his duty at once to come to the Saviour. Mounting his horse again he rode on. The negro did no more fishing that day, but drew in his line, put his rod upon his shoulder, and went home to pray. Ere long the peace of God dawned upon his heart, and he began to use his words for Christ. Years afterward the Bishop was within some score of miles of the place, and across the country tidings came to him of the result of that conversation on the river bank. The negro had told his companions every-where the story of the cross,

and not less than a hundred were counted up as the trophies of his labor.

“In March, 1854,” says the narrator of the following incident, “Bishop Simpson and myself were passing up the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon, to the Dalles. It was before the keels of noble steamers had vexed the waters of the Upper Columbia. Seventy miles from Portland, at the Cascades, we took passage in an Indian canoe for the Dalles, fifty miles distant. The whole country was a wilderness, unoccupied save by a small company of United States military at the Dalles, and a few daring whites, adventurers, and some of them men of dissolute habits and depraved morals. Our crew in the canoe were two Indians and three or four squaws. The passengers, besides the Bishop and myself, were two or three Indian dogs, and two white men more depraved than the dogs. Their hides—the men’s—were full of mean whisky, and each had a quart bottle to replenish from.

“Their mouths were full of cursing, bitterness, and obscenity. Their foul dialect, employed for the purpose of irritating their cler-

ical fellow-passengers, was very annoying. Once or twice a stern reprimand rose to the lips of the writer, and it was half uttered, but at a signal from the Bishop it was repressed. Shortly after one of the drunkards fell into a condition of insensibility. The other became silent. The Bishop, at length, very kindly inquired of him whether his mother was still living. He very eagerly answered that she was. 'Is your mother a praying woman?' 'O yes.' 'Do you think she is praying for you every day?' With deep feeling the answer came, 'I have no doubt of it.' Finding that he had struck a chord that vibrated, the Bishop continued, 'Do you suppose your mother knows the kind of life you are leading?' The sensibilities of the dissipated youth were stirred. The fountain of tears was unsealed, and with sobs and flowing tears the young man replied that he 'would not have her know it for the world.'

"The subject was followed up by the Bishop with an earnest, warm exhortation, which was apparently well received. The day passed away. We lodged at an Indian camp, and the



next morning parted with our whisky-bloated fellow-passengers. The Bishop has, probably, never seen those young men since, but the seed he sowed there by the wayside brought forth its harvest in God's own good time, as the writer learned more than ten years afterward.

"In October, 1864, I was coming down the Upper Columbia in a splendid steamer, carrying, perhaps, a hundred passengers, when a well-dressed, fine-looking gentleman introduced himself to me, informing me that he was the young man to whom the Bishop put those searching but kindly questions on the canoe in March, 1854, and that that interview has been made a life-long blessing to him, 'for,' said he, 'I have led a sober, industrious life; I have a respectable family, and I have amassed a competence, and I am trying to live a religious life.' He ascribed it all, under God's blessing, to the faithfulness of the good Bishop."

O, who can tell the effect of a single sentence spoken for Christ and sent home to the sinner's heart by the Spirit of God! We once, while seated in her father's house, asked

a young lady to give her heart to Christ. In great anger she rose from her seat, and abruptly left the room without a single word of reply. The next time we saw her, to our great surprise, was at the class-meeting, when she rose and told what God had done for her soul. At the close of the exercises we inquired how and when she had been led to seek religion. Her reply was, "It is the result of what you said to me."

In the same station we met another as we were passing near her house, and asking her if she had given her heart to God and receiving a negative reply, urged her to commence a life of prayer. In a few months we were called to her dying bed, where she lay rejoicing in the presence of Him to whom she had come very shortly after we had spoken to her.

"I am so happy!" said she; "I was never so happy in my life before. I have no doubts of my acceptance with God. I am going home to him." And she died, another trophy of redeeming grace.

We happened one day to call at the house of a merchant in the city of New York who

was a professor of religion. He was absent, but his wife was at home, who was a stranger to the Saviour's love, and with whom we sat down to converse a few moments. Ere we left in a word or two we advised her to pray, and to go with her husband to his class-meeting, and present herself as a seeker of religion. We never saw her afterward. In less than a year we heard that she was dead, coupled with the information that she had done just as we had advised her—had attended the class-meeting, had found the Saviour, and died trusting in his love.

When Colonel Russel commanded the Tenth Connecticut regiment during our late war, it is related of him that he asked Governor Buckingham for an evangelical chaplain, to make, as he said, his soldiers the best of troops. He was not a Christian himself—quite the reverse, but he told the governor that he had noticed that the bravest, most reliable men in danger were the religious ones. Hence his request. The governor readily promised to grant it. but before the interview closed tenderly said to the colonel, "You seem anxious about your

men that they may become Christians; do you feel no concern about yourself?" It was but a word or two of inquiry and appeal, and they separated. The bloody fight of Roanoke was over, and Colonel Russel was among the dead. He had fallen leading on those same brave fellows to victory. But before that fatal day he had sought the acquaintance of a Christian officer for guidance in the way of salvation, and to that Christian friend he stated that the few short, faithful words of the governor had been the means of arousing his conscience to the subject of his own salvation, and they became, may we not hope, the instrument of the Holy Spirit in preparing him for the sudden termination of his earthly career.

It is in this spirit that every man who has accomplished much for Christ devotes his words his all to him. The great Jonathan Edwards wrote on one occasion: "I have this day been before God, and have given myself—all that I am and have—to God, so that I am in no respect my own; I can challenge no right in myself, in this understanding, this will, these affections. Neither have I a right to

this body, or any of its members; no right to these hands, these feet, these eyes, these ears, this tongue; I have given myself clean away."

A widowed mother gave her only son to the missionary work in a foreign land. As the vessel moved off from the shore, she stood looking with streaming eyes and almost broken heart, and then said, "O Jesus, I do this for thee." When Christian workers get to this point that they are willing to give every thing for Jesus, then we shall see other and better days; "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose," and ere long "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

## CHAPTER X.

## FOOD CONSECRATED.

WHY do we eat? Is it to gratify the palate by the taste of all the good things we can afford to buy? Is it to indulge in the sensual enjoyment we derive from the act in common with the brutes? It is related of one of the Roman emperors that it was his custom to take an emetic after eating that he might more quickly return to the pleasures of the table. There are many men who thus eat simply for the agreeable sensations it produces. If they were to go to heaven and find no eating there, they would be deprived of their chief enjoyment. There are others who eat simply to satisfy the cravings of appetite. This is more reasonable, but it is not the highest motive of Christianity, which is described in the words, "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

There is a perfect antidote in this commandment to all immoderate use of food. He that

eats and drinks to the glory of God does so to sustain and give strength to his body that he may live to do good. He eats the quantity which he believes to be sufficient for this purpose and no more. Not only does he restrain his appetite in reference to quantity, but from the food which is set before him he selects the quality, though its taste may be less palatable, which he believes will best suit his digestive organs, and does not fill his stomach with a promiscuous mass of dainties tending not only to clog the operation of his corporeal faculties, but to obscure the delicate perceptions of the soul. He makes eating a matter of conscience as well as every thing else. If we were to conform to the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this respect we would follow the Divine precept. The Discipline, in referring to food, says: "Do you use only that kind and that degree which is best for both body and soul? Do you eat no more at each meal than is necessary?"

We have reason, personally, to thank God that we adopted in practice, at the commencement of our ministry, this provision of our

Discipline. Not only has it been a spiritual aid to us, but it has been the means of health and bodily enjoyment. So it is with every thing God requires us to consecrate. It is a benefit to ourselves. We may not see it clearly at the time of its adoption, but time will show, even in this world, and as regards the things of this world, the wisdom of our Father's precepts. There are thousands of professors of religion who dull their intellects and obscure their faith by overloading their stomachs.

Dr. Dio Lewis, in one of his excellent works, has well said: "In all countries where food is plenty and cheap, excessive eating is well-nigh universal. The parents indulge in excesses." "The children inherit an unnatural craving; during childhood they are baited with cakes, candies, and other sweetmeats, and afterward they are tempted with a variety of condimented meats, and these are followed with appetizing desserts, fruits, and other tidbits. The results are seen on every hand in almost every individual. The stomach becomes weak and deranged, the body heavy and unelastic,



the mind foggy and sluggish, the temper irritable."

If we employ our intellectual faculties in devising the means of gormandizing and stuffing to its utmost capacity this finely-wrought frame, which God has given us, that we may preserve it in good condition and in the best working order, to the utmost possible limit on earth, we are guilty of a crime of which the brutes are incapable. If we eat every thing that is set before us simply because it tickles our palate, it is neither following the principles of true religion nor of hygiene. Let us eat, then, for the glory of God, as the Bible directs us, so that body and soul may be fitted to do his will, that we may not cut short our usefulness, and be guilty of a suicide for which we must give account before the throne of God.

There is an evil in connection with this subject of which many good people are guilty. The most solemn consecration should be made in reference to it if we wish to enjoy the fullness of Christ. We invite our friends to an entertainment, and we provide such a repast

of varied food as we know will injure them, unless they have a conscience or prudence we will hardly give them leave to exercise. "Ah! but," you say, "I must treat my friends well." Just stop a minute and think if that is your motive. If you mean by treating your friends well that you want to show them that you know how to set a good table, and exhibit a good assortment of dishes, then you are right; but such an exhibition of skill and capital is of questionable benefit to your guests. Give your friends the credit for more intellect and less appetite, and you will more truly compliment them.

Drink may be included under the heading of this chapter. How much nourishment there is in tea, coffee, chocolate, and their accompaniments of milk and sugar, and how beneficial or otherwise they are to the system, we do not pretend to decide. If they are taken to the glory of God, and we believe them to be good for us, wherein can there be condemnation? A tender conscience, quick to feel the approach of evil, is a good thing; a morbid conscience, which sees sin when there is none, is an un-

comfortable companion ; but a diseased conscience, which strains at a gnat and swallows a camel, is an evil. The motive of every person must decide on such a question as this.

If we think wine, ale, or stronger liquors a benefit to us, can these not be used in small quantities to the glory of God? When the car of Juggernaut is brought forth there are thousands of men who drag at the ropes, and some half dozen, more or less, throw themselves beneath the wheels and are crushed to death. If a Christian man had been standing among the spectators on such an occasion he might have said, "I need a little exercise ; I will help to pull the great image over those prostrate forms." You would have said if you stood there that he was a participant in the sin of murder. There are several half dozens of people in the United States, about seventy-five thousand a year, who fall before the Moloch of intemperance ; and there are a few drunkards' wives and children who suffer some trifling inconvenience through the use of these beverages, and a few men, persons who contribute nothing to the capital stock of the na-

tion by their earnings, but who live on the wages of the wretched men to whom they deal out poison in every glass, and on the tears and groans of worse than orphaned children and widowed wives.

This great Juggernaut is steadily moving on, crushing its victims at every turn of its ponderous wheels. There are thousands dragging at the ropes. The lusty brewers, distillers, and retailers are in the van, followed by the moderate drinkers, whose vigorous pull keeps the vast and infernal machine in motion, while the hundreds of thousands of poor, bloated, wretched, tottering drunkards hold on until they are lost sight of beneath the wheels and are gone. We will not touch the ropes. "Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation." Save us from contributing in the slightest degree to the slaughter of our fellow-man by saying Godspeed to his murderers. God forbid that we as Christians should countenance, if it be but in the weight of a feather, the sale or use of what is such a curse to our country and the world!

There is a tremendous battle going on be-

tween the advocates of sobriety and drunkenness. It is centering in these United States, in this goodly heritage which God has given us. Light is pouring down upon us as to the evils of manufacturing, selling, and using alcoholic and fermented liquors. We believe that God means to save this country not only from the withering blight of rum, but from the more insidious effects of wine and beer-drinking, no less fatal in undermining our national morality, because they are ceaselessly erecting the foundations, and are more imperceptible in their influences. Every man is on one side or the other. The Saviour says as to this and every other struggle with the powers of darkness, "He that is not with me is against me." All men know, or ought to know, that the first step toward drunkenness is taking a little beer, wine, or brandy, seldom the latter at the beginning. Whosoever, then, takes a glass of wine or beer or brandy has taken the first step toward drunkenness. No one can dispute this conclusion. It is clear as the soundest logic can make it. It is possible that he may be saved from a drunkard's end, but he has put

himself upon the track. Not only does he thus sin against himself, but, by his example, he bids his neighbor do likewise. He takes hold of the ropes of the great Juggernaut, and with the brewers, distillers, moderate drinkers gives it one pull forward, and takes his place in the gigantic army which is endeavoring to destroy all sobriety in our land.

The whole traffic in intoxicating liquors is an outrage, a gross imposition upon the morality, decency, patriotism, and religion of the nation. It is astonishing that men have borne it so long. If a thousand mad dogs were turned loose upon the city of New York, they would cause less death, less sorrow, than alcohol causes in a single day. What would the indignation of the community be against the man who would turn into our streets a single rabid animal! And yet we suffer our streets to be infested with these dens of murder and crime, and we pay our taxes to support the men who stand behind their bars and their families—to support their victims and their families, and tamely bear the imposition. This glorious country was founded by our fathers

after herculean struggles to establish civil liberty. Is it heroic, is it brave, is it religious, is it manly, to stand still and see a horde of unprincipled men, who care nothing for the welfare of the nation, debauch our sons, attack our institutions, and corrupt the morality which forms the basis of our national prosperity? We repeat, the entire business of distilling, brewing, and selling is an outrage, a fraud upon the nation. It is a parasite living upon the life-blood of the body politic. "But," says the opposer, "Christ drank wine at the communion table." It is false as falsity can be that he drank the alcoholic mixture which we call wine in this day. You may search all through the gospels and the epistles, where the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is spoken of, and you will find that it does not say that he or the disciples drank wine at all. The word is not mentioned. It says he took the cup and he speaks of the fruit of the vine, but not of wine. It was impossible that it could have been the wine of modern days, because fermentation and leaven were banished by their ecclesiastical law from the passover feast, and

Christ never violated such institutions. So clear is it that it was only the pure juice of the grape they drank, that as we go back to ascertain what was the Jewish custom, we find that the grapes were preserved by the Jews for that very occasion.

But the Saviour sanctioned the use of wine at Cana of Galilee. So he did, but not alcoholic or fermented wine. The distillation of alcohol was not discovered until centuries after Christ, and the wine in use among multitudes of the ancients, and in use among many Eastern people now, is a thick unfermented grape syrup, which was weakened by water, the same as we would weaken lemon syrup in order to drink it. During our residence in South America we found this very syrup, made from the grapes, in use among the people. The six water-pots of stone, ordinarily used for the washing or purification of the Jews, on this occasion doubtless contained the water which was mingled with the syrup, as it was from them the Saviour directed them to draw. And it was weaker on other occasions, as the ruler of the feast supposed it would be on this, as



the strength of the syrup became exhausted, and when men had well drunk--were well filled, not intoxicated, because more water was added when the quantity decreased, without adding additional syrup. Who dares to charge the Saviour of the world with using or encouraging the use of that which will make a man a drunkard? Who dares accuse our Lord Jesus Christ with putting to his lips the modern wine cup, and of swallowing its fiery contents?

The Methodist Episcopal Church by her rules on this subject is a grand temperance society. She prohibits "drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity." She shows what she means by this rule in the following questions to her ministers: "Do you use only that kind and that degree of drink which is best both for your body and soul? Do you choose and use water for your common drink, and only take wine medicinally or sacramentally?"

Shall we, then, as Christians, ever say that we can drink wine, beer, or alcohol to the glory

of God? Never, never! Shall we, by our example, which speaks louder than words, bid our neighbor take that which forms one step in the ladder leading downward to drunkenness and eternal death? Never, never!

John Wesley was far ahead of his age on this question as he was on almost every other, and a century and more ago, long before the modern temperance reformation commenced, uttered the following terrible denunciation of the rumseller:—

“Neither may we gain by hurting our neighbor *in his body*. Therefore we may not sell any thing which tends to impair health. Such is, eminently, all that liquid fire commonly called drams or spirituous liquors. It is true these may have a place in medicine, they may be of use in some bodily disorders; although there would rarely be occasion for them were it not for the unskillfulness of the practitioner. Therefore such as prepare and sell them only for this end may keep their conscience clear. But who are they? Who prepare them only for this end? Do you know ten such distillers in England? Then excuse these. But all

who sell them in the common way, to any that will buy, are poisoners general. They murder his majesty's subjects by wholesale, neither does their eye pity or spare. They drive them to hell like sheep; and what is their gain? Is it not the blood of these men? Who then would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces? A curse is in the midst of them; the curse of God cleaves to the stones, the timber, the furniture of them! The curse of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves; a fire that burns to the nethermost hell! Blood, blood is there: the foundation, the floor, the walls, the roof, are stained with blood! And canst thou hope, O thou man of blood, though thou art 'clothed in scarlet and fine linen, and farest sumptuously every day,' canst thou hope to deliver down thy *fields of blood* to the third generation? Not so, for there is a God in heaven; therefore thy name shall soon be rooted out. Like as those whom thou hast destroyed body and soul, 'thy memorial shall perish with thee!'"

## CHAPTER XI.

## DRESS CONSECRATED.

**W**ORSE than heathenish are our customs of dress. The sewing machine, instead of abridging the hours of labor, instead of rendering the toil less in making up a lady's garment, only adds more flounces, ruffles, frills, and trimmings, with such a prodigious amount of additional material that the actual measurement in yards is almost incredible. The time, and consequent money, which should be saved by the sewing machine are lost in the extra labor. Heathen women are content to dress in the same material, and in the same unchanged style, year after year, generation after generation; but Christians who have in baptism promised to renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh in that they will not follow or be led by them, actually follow and are led by a thousand absurd changes of the

fashions of this world, occupying more time and thought than they bestow on prayer and on all the other exercises put together of that sacred religion the name of which they bear.

And women who are not ignorant of the precepts of the Bible on this subject, and who have taken upon themselves the solemn vows of baptism, yearly travel in foreign climes, and publish to their benighted sisters of pagan lands the interpretation which they put upon the Gospel as to the self-denial of their attire, until it is often the case that one of the first things by which a convert from heathenism to Christ is known is the relinquishment of her previous simple and plain clothing, and the adoption of the gaudy dress of a thus perverted Christianity. We send our female missionaries to heathen countries, and they take in their hands the rules by which they profess to be guided, which forbid the adornment of the person with gold or pearls or costly array, and such is the lack of instruction on this point, and sometimes such is the force of a so-called Christian example, that a love of dress among heathens is developed which was never devel-

oped before, and the simple change of the jewel from the nose to the ear is considered sufficient evidence of having forsaken pagan customs, just as if two golden ornaments stretching down from the ears were less barbaric than one only pendant from the nose.

We are not speaking of the unhealthfulness or unseemliness of our fashions, but of the wickedness of devoting ourselves thus to the world. It has sometimes seemed to us that our devoted mothers, who taught us in the morning of life to bow the knee in prayer, our earnest Methodist sisters, who were accustomed to wrestle at the altar for sinners in times of revival, were passing away before this god of dress. Who has ever seen a gayly dressed lady tricked out in the ordinary style of the day lifting up her voice before the congregation in prayer? The two things do not go together. There is a conscious incongruity between them.

An elegantly dressed lady one day called upon Bishop Hedding, stating that she felt the need of religion and wished to be a Christian. The Bishop gave her such instruction as he thought she needed, and gently hinted to her

as she left the room that her dress was not in conformity with the rules of our Church. In a day or two she appeared in neat and modest robes, joined the Church, and became an earnest Christian.

“But what harm is there in dressing well?” There is no harm in dressing well, we reply, if you use the word in a right sense. There is harm, however, in expending the time and money in dress which modern fashion demands, and there is harm in thus copying the usages of the world. We can easily determine how far we may go by a single test. The Bible teaches, as we have already said, that we are to do all things to the glory of God. We are, then, to dress so as to please God. This does not mean that we are to make scare-crows of ourselves, or wear what is a hundred years behind the time, or to be uncleanly, like the ancient hermits, or untidy or slovenly in our persons; but instead of consulting the tastes of our friends and the tastes of this sinful world, to consult the will of our blessed Master. As we buy an article, or order one to be made, the question to be asked

is, What does Jesus think of it? Does he approve of every thing I am wearing? Would he smile upon me and on my apparel if he were walking by my side?

We have not space to enter into an argument as to the waste of money and of precious time, of the vanity, pride, and the encouragement of a worldly spirit involved in fashionable dress, but we must mention one evil which is universal. Why do a great many of our poorer and middle classes, in city and country, absent themselves from the public services of God on the Sabbath day? Because they cannot dress as well as those who usually form our congregations. They see members of the Church dressed in their best garments, who too often take this occasion to show how much finery they can put on the temple of the Holy Ghost, which they profess their bodies to be, and these poorer and middle classes feel they are degraded by appearing in such an assembly in the clothes they can afford to buy. This feeling on their part may not be right. We may say they ought to go to the house of God to please him, and if their



clothes are acceptable to him it is enough. But they are not yet above human nature. They have not yet acquired the perfect motive which we thus demand of them. How many thousands of the members of our Churches would stay away from the sanctuary if they could dress no better than they can! How many thousands of professors are actually detained from the house of prayer every year simply because suitable bonnets, shawls, etc., are not in readiness for a winter, spring, fall, or summer fashion!

What a tremendous and wide-spread hinderance this is to the progress of the Gospel! If women were to dress to the glory of God, putting on some cheap material which the rain would not spoil, and which their neighbors could afford to imitate, what a wondrous change there would be! What an effect would be produced in the city of New York if on some Sabbath morning every member of the various Churches should appear clothed in garments such as they believed would please God and bless their neighbors!

We may well imagine that our divine Lord

and Mary his mother were never clothed in the fashions of the day. His reputed father was a carpenter, and he was known in the community, before he commenced his ministry, as the carpenter's son, and his mother as the carpenter's wife. No one can think of Mary sweeping through the streets of Nazareth, or Bethlehem, or Jerusalem as a fashionably-dressed lady. Neither can we conceive that Lazarus, Mary, or Martha, whom Jesus so peculiarly loved, and whose home was one of his chosen retreats, were such followers of the fashions of this world as many of our Church-members are in these days. If Jesus should now appear in person *incognito*, just as he once appeared in Judea, dressed as the carpenter's son, and Mary dressed as the carpenter's wife, and they should enter one of our elegant churches, we question if there would be many pew doors thrown open to receive them.

We believe in the lofty devotion, purity, and Christian character of woman. As a mother, she molds our character; as a wife and sister, she refines and elevates the family

circle. We believe that she who was first at the sepulcher of the Saviour is a representative of her sex. She is usually first to give her heart to Christ, and first in every good work. Men have their terrible vices, such as we have described in the last chapter, and they descend more universally and more deeply in moral obliquity than women. Why cannot she, who to us is only a little lower than an angel, arise and shake off forever this degradation of fashion, folly, and outward show? Methodism in its early years accomplished much. It was reforming the world in this respect. But just as society was beginning to feel its influence and to admire its beautiful simplicity, the Church succumbed, and gave up the ground it had gained. Is it too late to return to the first principles of our fathers in the Gospel, to those rules which every member of our communion has sacredly promised to observe, prohibiting us to put on gold and costly apparel? Is there no meaning to us in such laws, enforced as they are by additional sanctions, such as the following?

“We should by all means insist on the rules

concerning dress. This is no time to encourage superfluity in dress. Therefore let all our people be exhorted to conform to the spirit of the apostolic precept, not to adorn themselves 'with gold, or pearls, or costly array.'"

Shall we be false to our vows, false to our powers of usefulness, false to our own dignity of character, and false to Christ and heaven? Here, again, as well as on the question of the liquor traffic, Wesley was ahead of the age in which he lived. How earnestly, how faithfully he pleaded with the Methodists of his day on this subject! He says:—

"I conjure you all who have any regard for me, show me before I go hence that I have not labored, even in this respect, in vain for near half a century. Let me see, fore I die, a Methodist congregation full as plain dressed as a Quaker congregation. Only be more consistent with yourselves. Let your dress be cheap as well as plain. Otherwise you do but trifle with God and me and your own souls. I pray, let there be no costly silks among you how grave soever they may be. Let there be no Quaker linen—proverb-

ially so called for their exquisite fineness—no Brussels lace, no elephantine hats or bonnets, those scandals of female modesty. Be all of a piece, dressed from head to foot as persons *professing godliness*; professing to do every thing, small and great, with the single view of pleasing God.

“Let not any of you who are rich in this world endeavor to excuse yourselves from this by talking nonsense. It is stark, staring nonsense to say, ‘Oh, I can *afford* this or that!’ If you have regard for common sense, let that silly word never come out of your mouth. No man living can *afford* to waste any part of what God has committed to his trust. None can *afford* to throw any part of that food and raiment into the sea which was lodged with him on purpose to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. And it is far worse than simple waste to spend any part of it in gay or costly apparel. For this is no less than to turn wholesome food into deadly poison. It is giving so much money to poison both yourselves and others, as far as your example spreads, with pride, vanity, anger, lust, love of

the world, and a thousand 'foolish and hurtful desires,' which tend to 'pierce them through with many sorrows.' And is there no harm in all this! O God, arise and maintain thy own cause! Let not men or devils any longer put out our eyes, and lead us blindfold into the pit of destruction!" "I beseech you, O ye parents, do not hinder your children from following their own convictions, even though you might think they would look prettier if they were adorned with such gewgaws as other children wear!"

## CHAPTER XII.

## INTEGRITY IN BUSINESS.

AS we rode out one day with one of the members of the Church in which we were then preaching, we had a long conversation on the subject of honesty in business. He was a merchant in the village where we dwelt, and was very frank as to his sentiments on the subject. He maintained stoutly that a man could not keep a store with success unless, in various small ways, he defrauded his customers. He did not say that he committed such frauds himself, but the inference was pretty strong that he did so. We contended just as earnestly that it was not necessary thus to make cheating a part of our business; that a man who was upright and honest in dealing was most likely to succeed; and, supposing the principle he advocated to be correct, then no Christian man should keep a store, because it was a sin to rob our neighbors.

It is long ago now, and when we were young

in the ministry, that we met this brother, and his remarks made us very sad. He was a fellow-Christian, or professed to be so. We preached to him every Sabbath, and met him at the prayer and class-meetings, and though we talked long on the occasion to which we allude, he urged no less strongly than at first, at the close of our interview, the necessity of dishonesty as a means of success. Only a few months passed and he failed in business and left the village. We have never seen or heard of him since. We think his case is an illustration of the usual result of his principles—that if a man wants to break down commercially, a very easy way to do it is to be smart enough to cheat his customers in trifling things under the impression that he is not found out.

In the same village, at the same time, there was an unassuming man, a member of the same Church, who kept another store of the same nature, where dry goods and groceries were sold. We asked him what he thought of such a principle as that for which his neighbor contended. He said he did not believe in it, and did not practice it. This brother continued year after



year in the village, his business increasing until he enlarged his store, beloved and respected by all, giving regularly his proportion of money toward the support of the Church, until, with a competency sufficient for the wants of his family and himself, he sold out and is still the honored resident of the beautiful village of —, an illustration of the familiar maxim that "Honesty is the best policy," even in worldly matters.

Some people abuse the Church because of the dishonest tricks of some of its members. This is all very well if the knaves in the Church could hear and be benefited by their strictures. Such critics forget that Christians are pained deeply by such stains upon their escutcheon. We were struggling once to bring up a cold and formal Church to a state of religious life and activity. There was one of our members, who had a most estimable wife and family, so incorrigible a rogue that the odor of his name pervaded the whole community. His word was not worth a dollar. Accumulated little debts were standing against him in all directions. He made promises to pay as easily as

he breathed, but they were worth no more than the breath which issued from his lips. If he could succeed in making a trade or a bargain with some unwary neighbor, there was sure to be some plausible ruse by which the latter was deceived. He seldom attended our public services, and never the social means of grace. He ought to have been expelled, but, as we are not speaking of that point, it is not necessary to say why he was not. When we came to the battle-field of extra meetings in the fall he was on hand, as if he were a principal leader of the Church militant. Up in the center of the altar he stood, the most conspicuous object to the congregation, laboring and praying for sinners who, every one knew, needed conversion less than he did himself. If he had come as a seeker of religion, or as a backslider returning to the fold, it would have seemed more consistent; but his very presence repelled whoever might otherwise have had a disposition to come to the Saviour, and sincere members of the Church shrunk from the spot which he occupied. How little worldly men imagine the mortification of the minister and other breth-

ren of the Church when they are obliged to stand by and acknowledge as fellow-laborers such inconsistent professors! Proud sinners point to them, glorying in their own probity, asserting that they have more religion than Church members, as if honesty was the fulfillment of the whole law. They are fond of quoting the text, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," as if to love mercy and to walk humbly with God were not part of their obligation. Honesty is a part of religion but not the whole of it. A man may be honest toward his neighbor and dishonest toward his God.

But how much lack of this virtue there is among business men who are in the Church of God! How much falsehood in keeping promises to pay small debts to dependents and others! How many times such men are called upon for payments when the money is in their pockets or within their reach, and the applicant is turned away! We read of those on whose foreheads the name of Jesus is written. If the true character of these brethren were written

there it would be "liars." How much falsehood there is in keeping promises to manufacture and deliver articles of daily use! The carpenter, the blacksmith, the mason, the painter, the shoemaker, the tailor, lie two or three times as to the day when their tasks will be completed, and have such slight compunctions as to their sin that they hardly name it in their evening private prayer. Thank God, small stealing is not so common! Protestantism has almost conquered this sin in Church members. But in Roman Catholic countries, and we speak that which we do know and have seen, petty theft is universal. It is not expected to find servants who will not pilfer. Their daily constant thefts are unavoidable. The lock and key are the only protection. Cooks, who have the labor of going to market and carrying home a heavy basket containing their purchases, will hire out and live with you for less wages than if you do your marketing yourself and release them from the toil, because they purloin in the act more than the amount of any extra wages they would receive. It is true, there is much of the same kind of stealing in this country

among railroad conductors, stage-drivers, and clerks, but it is committed by men who are not members of our evangelical Churches.

There was a time in the city of New York, and not many years ago, when merchants and storekeepers asked a certain price for their goods, and were expected to deduct a few cents or a few dimes to almost every purchaser. The door was thus open to a vast amount of fraud. A ceaseless effort was going on to sell for a little more than an article was worth, and to buy for a little less. The purchaser did not wish to get any thing at a fair value, but aimed to cheapen it as much as possible, and, dishonestly, to pay for it less than it was worth. But the world is advancing. Under the present regulations, in respectable stores, of fixed prices, it is more easy for men who are trying to do right to conduct their business with strict integrity. And this strict, absolute, perfect integrity the law of God requires. "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have."

When Ephraim is said to have fed on the wind, and to have increased in lies and desolation, his character is thus described: "He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand." "Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable?" "Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?" "A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight." "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight."

We have in our minds a sort of sharp practice, said to exist among some dealers, by which in giving change and in the entry and footing up of accounts the half cent is always turned in their favor, and that possibly their prices are arranged with this object in view. It seems to us that such a proceeding is not only dishonest, but so contemptibly mean, small, and sordid, that for the sake of humanity we would fain doubt its existence.

Some one will now reply, "All that you have said applies to any Christian, and not pe-

cularly to a state of perfect love." Doubtless it applies to every Christian, in whatever stage of grace he may be, as soon as he understands the length and breadth of the Divine law. But as there are babes and little children in Christ, many of them already gray-headed men, we are not willing to unchurch and unchristianize them by denying their conversion if they have sinned without proper reflection in any of the particulars we have named. Many a man in selling or buying an article exaggerates or depreciates its value thoughtlessly, and almost unconsciously goes beyond the strict truth. He does not discover distinctly the sin he is committing. Others will make a promise, intending to fulfill it, but do not practice proper diligence in doing so. In such cases it might be both untrue and uncharitable to say that such men are not Christians. But if the eye be shut to the truth, when seen and understood, then condemnation comes on the soul, and a forfeiture of our adoption as God's children.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## SOCIAL TASTES.

THERE are many members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and it may be members of our sister Churches, who began life when they were poor. They lived in parts of houses, and neither their furniture nor table exhibited much of what the world is accustomed to denominate refinement. Having become Christians when young, the religion of Christ taught them to be temperate, moral, and frugal in their habits, and a natural result was the gradual accumulation of wealth. Perhaps they did not see the duty of employing much of this increase of substance in the work of God; perhaps they did employ some of it in this way, or it may have been so tied up that they could not have done it had they wished to do so.

After the lapse of years a striking change is visible in their style of living. A splendid



mansion, filled with costly furniture and fine paintings, takes the place of the humble apartments occupied in their younger days. Their families grow up and are brought into the society of young persons, connected with wealthy families, whose parents have never known the restraints of Methodism, in whose judgment dancing, the card table, and the wine cup are innocent amusements. These children of Methodism, who owe their education, their good moral habits, their position in society, their all to Methodism, as they become young men and women grow ashamed of what they contemptuously call the old-fashioned strictness which has made both them and their parents what they are, and studiously avoid all Church-membership, or seek a Church the rules of which do not speak out so distinctly against the fashionable follies of the day. Sometimes, however, they preserve their attachment to the old Church; but instead of obeying her rules, they put such a construction upon them in reference to what suits their tastes as to destroy all their force, so that when they are of the age at which their fa-

thers and mothers joined the Church there is little resemblance between them, except in the outward name. Their parents were accustomed to attend the class and prayer-meeting; perhaps their father was a leader; but they insist that the custom of the modern Church makes these means of grace indifferent; the voice of their parents at their age was often heard in the love-feast, but they contend that the institution is antiquated. A new generation of Methodists is thus rising up, especially in the more fashionable quarters of cities, which is dragging our Church down to its own level, and preparing the way for a declension of piety and doctrine, such as was experienced in ages past by the Greek and Latin Churches, and still later by the English Church previously to the era of John Wesley.

And all this is the fault of the parents, who instead of constructing and furnishing their improved residences with a view to comfort and convenience, and with the view of pleasing Christ, imitated the expensive and showy customs of the world, and introduced their families into an atmosphere of ungodliness

and tinsel fashion which it was impossible for them to breathe without contamination. The parents, instead of renouncing the pomps and vanities, which they had promised to do in baptism, brought their loved ones within the charmed circle, and while they escaped, perhaps, themselves on account of their age, they left those whom God had given them to be trained up and educated for his kingdom, to be trained up and educated by the devil. We knew a brother in a western city, a member of our Church, who had a handsome, respectable house, which was handsomely furnished, on the finest avenue of the town. But it was not quite elegant enough, and he constructed a palace, to adorn which there were no American-made carpets, or sofas, or chairs, or looking-glasses of sufficient richness, and they were imported from Europe. When he was just about ready to enjoy the sumptuous dwelling God called him by death to account for the wealth he had thus expended. He had two or three children, none of whom were members of our Church. If men will persist in launching themselves on such a sea, how shall they

give an account before the throne of God for possessions which are thus worse than wasted? How much better to live moderately, and to avoid throwing our families out on the whirlpool of fashion, renouncing all ambition to be, what Christ never was in this world, and what he never intended we should be, imitators of its hollow-hearted votaries. "I am not of the world," said the Saviour. Ye "are not of the world;" "if ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." And a Christian never will shine in the fashionable world until he compromises with Christ, until the wings of his devotion are clipped, and until his peace and joy have become so covered up, by the rubbish of its pleasures, that the companions he has chosen can see no traces of them in his countenance or manner.

How much better, as our substance increases, to increase our usefulness by devoting it to the Saviour! How much better to bestow it upon the suffering and needy than to curse our children by incentives to a worldly spirit! Hear

what John Wesley, one of the wisest men God has ever given to the world, says on this subject: "Many years ago, when I was at Oxford, in a cold winter's day, a young maid (one of those we kept at school) called upon me. I said, You seemed half-starved. Have you nothing to cover you but that thin linen gown? She said, 'Sir, this is all I have.' I put my hand in my pocket, but found I had scarce any money left, having just paid away what I had. It immediately struck me, Will thy Master say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold!' O justice! O mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid? See thy expensive apparel in the same light—thy gown, hat, head-dress. Every thing about thee, which cost more than Christian duty required thee to lay out, is the blood of the poor."

He says again, "Do not waste any part of so precious a talent merely in gratifying the desire of the eye by superfluous or expensive apparel, or by needless ornaments. Waste no

part of it in curiously adorning your houses, in superfluous or expensive furniture, in costly pictures, painting, gilding, books: in elegant rather than useful gardens. Let your neighbors, who know nothing better, do this." Neither this, however, nor the scriptural rule of doing all things to the glory of God, cuts off every thing that is ornamental, for the ornamental is not always useless. Furniture and pictures may be good—may be handsome—and not be lavishly expensive. Our heavenly Father has himself so gorgeously ornamented this world, that almost every thing beautiful is an imitation of the nature which he has spread before us. But there is a limit. That limit may be known by consulting what we conscientiously believe to be the tastes of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we build or hire a habitation we can be governed by what we think will please him rather than our neighbors. Every article of furniture we purchase may be purchased with the view of pleasing him rather than the world. In our mode of living we can adapt ourselves to that mode which we believe he would smile upon if he were to come again

upon the earth and sojourn in our family. We do not suppose the Saviour will condemn us, any more than he did the woman who poured the box of precious ointment on his head, when we are trying, in all our details of household expenditure, to do every thing for his sake.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## MONEY CONSECRATED.

WE proceed to observe that our money and property belong to God as well as every thing else. And if we dwell upon this subject we imitate the inspired historian of the early Christians. It is a remarkable and suggestive fact that in the Acts of the Apostles, when the young converts are referred to who, thousands in number, joined the Church, there is more space given to a relation of the consecration of their money, or their moneyed interests, than to the consecration of all other things put together. And this is not strange, because money is the universal power which commands all things and will purchase all things. He who undertakes to make a consecration of himself to God without including his purse, is like the manager who proposed to bring out the great tragedy of Shakspeare and leave out the part of Hamlet.

Our money, then—our property—must be



consecrated. The sincere Christian will decide what proportion of his earnings or salary he shall give directly to the Church and to other benevolent enterprises. It is true, however, that that which is employed for our personal expenses and the maintenance of our families is used for the glory of God, when the heart is pure, just as much as the contribution we make for the Church and the poor. But what we send out of our own household requires more faith, and, on that account, the proportion we shall give is to be fixed beforehand. This is a positive command of the Bible. It is the way which God has provided whereby the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches shall be prevented from smothering the good seed in our hearts. It is the way by which we may be saved, if God shall give us wealth, from the wretchedness of a miser's life, and the despair of a miser's death. It is a fearful thing to behold a rich man sinking into eternity and struggling in vain for salvation. We remember well one who spent his life in hoarding money, and was waked up by some trifling loss to see the precipice on which he stood. So

intensely did he seek peace with God that he spent one whole day in prayer beneath the trees of his orchard. We visited him frequently, urging him to trust in Christ, but his invariable reply was, "There is something in the way."

That something was the sum of a hundred and fifty thousand dollars which he had amassed without devoting any fixed part of it to God. Had the Saviour appeared to him in person, and said to him, "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor," in spite of all his earnestness it would probably have had the same effect that it did when spoken eighteen hundred years ago. The old man, we are told, before he began to amass wealth had tried to be a Christian, but as he felt his power to gain money, had given himself to the world; his hope of heaven had slipped away from him, and at seventy years of age he found himself without power to trust in the Saviour, and without the faith which would prompt him to give, for his sake, a dollar of his savings. He passed into eternity, constantly repeating, in answer to inquiries made

as to his spiritual state, "There is something in the way."

A proportion settled beforehand, while we are young in years, and before any accumulation of money, is the very mode which God requires in his Word, not so much for the good which our benefactions may do, as for the purpose of saving our own hearts from the terrible death-grip of avarice, a grip so unrelenting, so utterly impossible to escape from, that when a man has arrived at a certain age, without having learned the blessedness of giving, it is as easy to call upon the grave to give up its dead as to call upon him to uncover his buried store. How often we have seen such cases! How often we have all met with old men and women who are every year adding to their principal and interest, upon whom no earthly pressure can be brought which will extract a dollar for any religious or benevolent enterprise!

We say this consecration beforehand of a per centage on our receipts or salary is the very mode which Scripture teaches us. It is taught there, both by precept and example.

We do not base our argument upon the system of the Jews, though there is nothing among them more absolutely insisted on than the dedication of a tenth at least to sacred purposes. One might suppose that this would be enough to convince any sincere Christian that God required such a mode on the part of his people in this day. The proportion might be different—we dare not say it may be less than a tenth—but the precepts to the Jews, on this subject, show that it was God's chosen way in regard to his own chosen people. And it is a mode which has never been abolished by the Gospel. It is not a part of the ceremonial law connected with the sacrifices which ceased when Christ, the great sacrifice for sin, was offered once for all. It is a part of that everlasting moral law which Jesus said he came not to destroy but to fulfill. It was held in abeyance by the early converts of the apostolic era, simply because when severed from heathenism they gave their all—they brought their possessions and laid them at the apostles' feet.

We will reason, however, independently of

the Jewish dispensation. Take Jacob for an illustration. He lived in the age of the patriarchs, before the Hebrews became a nation—before the decalogue was given, and is, therefore, an example of an obedience to God's eternal law applicable to every age. He went out from his father's house, a young man, possessing nothing but his staff. In his journey he alighted upon a certain spot, where he tarried all the night. There he saw that memorable vision—a ladder reaching up to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. The Lord God of Abraham stood above it, who said to him, "Behold, I am with thee." And thereupon the young man, with the light of that sacred vision illuminating his mind, fresh from the presence of Jehovah, and conscious thus of what would be acceptable to him, made the solemn vow, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

This was Jacob's system, adopted before the acquisition of any property, and is given to us for our guidance, as well as any other part of the Bible. This was also the system of Zac-

cheus, who, instead of giving, like Jacob, ten per cent., gave fifty. "Behold, Lord," said he, "the half of my goods I give to the poor." The sacrifice was expressly approved by Christ, who said, "This day is salvation come to this house."

Now look at the very commencement of Christianity, immediately after the day of Pentecost, just at the moment when the disciples of Christ were living in the early sunshine of a new and glorious dispensation. There is not much said of how these converts from paganism were changed in their life and deportment. There is not much said of how they gave up the honors and pleasures of their previous lives, though all these were done; but there is a very special record made, as if it were intended to impress what is stated upon every member of the future Christian Church, of how they regarded their worldly substance. They did not stop at their income, but possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet. The principle was, that what they possessed

was no longer their own. As all things were in common, they gave all they had to the common stock. But the Gospel spread to other lands and a community of goods became impracticable, and is impracticable now, while there are no fires of persecution to purify the Christian Church, and no miraculous sight to detect deceit. The early Christians, therefore, wherever the community of goods ceased, returned to the law given by God to man from the time of Adam—a law which Cain and Abel obeyed when they brought, one a proportion of his fruits, the other a proportion of his flock—a law which Abraham obeyed when he gave a tenth to Melchizedek—a law which Jacob promised to obey as he commenced life—a law which was given to our race at the same time as the law of the Sabbath and of marriage, and is as binding and obligatory, and was intended to be a guide to us until the day of judgment, as to the mode in which we should make our benevolent contributions. It was not necessary to re-enact it after our Saviour's death, because it had been one of the institutes of his Church and people since his

people had had an existence on the earth. But so as to make it absolutely certain that all Christians are bound by its provisions, the Apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. xvi, 1, reminds the Church of its existence. He says: "Now concerning the collection for the saints," or benevolent objects, "as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you," there is no exception of the rich or poor, "lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Here every man is commanded, once a week, upon the Sabbath day, as a part of his devotional exercises, side by side with prayer and praise, before he goes to God's sanctuary, or after his return, to take out of his earnings during the past week the proportion or percentage he may fix upon and to lay it aside, not for himself, but as a fund for benevolent objects, ready for distribution in such a way, for God and the world, as his conscience may from time to time dictate.

We suppose all men, in all kinds of business, can calculate, or at least make an estimate of



what their earnings have been through the week sufficiently exact to obey this rule. A merchant in an uncertain business may not be able to fix upon any definite amount ; he may hardly know whether he is making money or losing it ; but he can tell about what it costs to support himself and his family, and this amount is impliedly the amount he is earning, and should form the basis or supposed receipts on which the beneficent percentage should be taxed. The great mass of people, however, are paid by the week, and from what they receive on Saturday night must make the contribution which is laid aside for God. Those persons, however, who receive their salary by the month or quarter, or in various sums at various times, should deduct the proportion when they receive the money. Some men who have long practiced this mode of beneficence prefer keeping a book account and charging against themselves, by a regular entry, the sums which they have devoted out of their earnings.

Let us carefully note here that the percentage we speak of is not to be computed on our savings after the support of our families. This

in many cases would be nothing. What we give is to be computed on our gross earnings. If a clerk has a salary of a thousand dollars a year, the computation on that is to be made at the commencement of the year, and the amount is to be laid aside as he receives his weekly, monthly, or quarterly payments, and if the payments are made to him at irregular times, then when he receives the money. Ministers are not excepted. There is not a single hint in the Bible which justifies a minister in excusing himself, and God's wisdom is apparent in this; for how could a minister preach a law with unction, pathos, and earnestness, which he is not practicing or obeying himself. Perhaps this is one reason why this existing and binding law of God has fallen into such neglect. Ministers in some way, and without any reason whatever, have considered themselves exempt from its provisions, and the result is that the pulpit has been comparatively silent on the subject. We have even left out of our teaching in the Sabbath-school a direct precept of the Gospel, as obligatory as any other scriptural law.

To make our meaning clear, we suppose a clerk's salary, or a minister's salary, to be, as we said, a thousand dollars. Ten per cent. on this would be a hundred dollars a year. If a mechanic receive twelve dollars a week, he will deduct one dollar and twenty cents from it before using any part of it for himself and family. If a young man starting in life receive but a hundred dollars a year, if he wish to be blessed by God he will deduct his percentage of ten dollars a year as he receives his money. With the *gross* receipts of a merchant or store-keeper the case, of course, is different. His earnings are only the difference between the amount he pays for goods and what he sells them for, deducting even from that the expense of carrying on his business. He must, as we have already said, form some estimate of what he makes by taking as a basis the amount he spares from his business toward the support of himself and family.

To deny this obligation is to deny one of the plainest commands of the Bible. It is to disregard the heaven-appointed system which God has prescribed for the purpose of saving

us from the perdition of increasing and hoarded wealth—a system which if commenced when we have nothing, as it was by Jacob, is easily practiced, and its benefits to ourselves and the world increase as our riches increase. If any of our readers who have neglected it should shrink from its adoption, because now it would be a serious tax upon their incomes, let them beware of defying what is clearly an obligation of Scripture, and a provision ordained for their own safety. Too soon they will find that the good seed sown in their hearts may be choked by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. Let our Sabbath-school children be taught to practice it. Let our children at the fireside, instead of learning to hoard money for themselves, learn to devote a regular proportion of it to the Church, the Missionary Society, and other benevolent objects. Let our young men as they commence life, like Jacob, consecrate their business by devoting a regular proportion of their earnings to Christ. How many young men, who come forward and seek the Saviour, draw back from their vows after coming to the

altar and devoting their lives to God! Is it not because, from lack of clear, positive, and authoritative instruction, they have failed to make money-getting a means of grace by adopting the provision on which we are insisting?

To deny this obligation is to place ourselves without the pale of all those precious promises which God has given to him who is faithful in the unrighteous mammon—promises which are intended to assure to the faithful Christian a competence and abundance of all the good things of this life—promises which are as positive and sure of their fulfillment as any others in the Bible—promises in which God himself assures us that the liberal soul shall be made fat, that while we scatter we shall increase; that he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; that what we give, God will pay us again; that he is not unrighteous to forget our labor of love; that he is well pleased with such sacrifices; and that, to crown the whole, whatever we give, we are in fact making a loan of it to God himself. Is there a single reader who doubts the security of such an investment,

or one who can imagine anywhere in the wide world a safer bank in which he may deposit his treasure?

When Hannah loaned her little boy to the Lord, and with an aching heart brought him to be educated amid the sacred precincts of the temple, she may have had some misgivings, in parting from her child, as to the interest she was to receive. But when she beheld the subsequent life of Samuel, a life which for over two thousand years has been a constant reminder to the world of early piety and manly purity, she could not doubt, even on the ground of self-interest, the wisdom of her sacrifice. So we never lose by trusting God. Many men remain poor all their lives because they are afraid to loan to God. Making no investments they receive no interest. They will not believe the language of Scripture, "It is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." They think that God will give grace and glory and some other things put down in their spiritual vocabulary, but they cannot conceive that he helps a man to make money. Such men, by excluding him from what occu-

pies so much of their time, so much of their thoughts, so much of their energies, receive a just recompense in being left to a life of care, fretfulness, and penury.

Let him who would acknowledge Christ in his business, in his work, in his daily toil, make a renewed consecration of himself this very moment. Let him adopt, by writing down for himself, the words of Jacob now : " Henceforth of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give a tenth [or more] unto thee."

Your earnings now may be very small. You may be only receiving the wages of a maid-servant. The tenth will then be so much the less. We are often unjust to the poorer members of the Church in not calling on them to contribute. We leave them to themselves, excusing our own slothfulness in asking them by saying, they are not able to give. But if we put them on a right system of contribution it will raise them higher. They will become more able to help in every good work.

Let the tenth or more, however, be your beginning, not your ending. If God shall bless

you with increasing wealth, while you improve the style of your living, your furniture, your dwelling, see to it that you improve upon the proportion of your benevolent contributions. It may then come up to the quarter, or, like Zaccheus, to the half.

But this percentage or proportion is not all that is implied in making the renewed consecration of which we are speaking. Wherever a man sets before him, as the object of life, the accumulation of money, even should he give fifty per cent. to the poor and to the Church, he is making a mistake which will destroy his soul. Not that it is wrong to be rich. Abraham, Job, Jacob, David, Hezekiah were men of wealth. It is the determination to be such that is ruinous. "They that will [Greek, *boulomenoi*, will, wish, resolve, determine] be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." When a man's heart is right, and he no longer purposes being rich as the main object of his life, God can pour into his lap showers of gold and it will not hurt him. There is no doubt that our



kind Father keeps many of his children poor because they are wishing too much to be rich. This is what the Bible says: "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase." To give them wealth would simply lead them to perdition. They have not begun a regular system of beneficence as a life-covenant—they have not given up the purpose to amass all they can for their own selfish objects, and God will not trust them with any more than what will supply their daily wants. Without this previous consecration, and without the previous sacrifice of a purpose to be rich, two effects follow the accumulation of money: *A man always wants more; as he gets more he grows more stingy.* How often it is that we see men living from hand to mouth, and they give something to charitable objects as they are called upon, but when a competency falls into their hands their purse is immediately closed. One prayed of old, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." It would be well for every one to pray, "Lord, save me from the possession of money until I have made a solemn, irrev-

ocable covenant to use it according to thy will."

A man possessing property unconsecrated becomes not only useless to the world, not only hardened and withered in heart, not only drowned in destruction and perdition, but his life is a life of perpetual care, foreboding, anxiety, and fretfulness. The dread of future want in the midst of his gathered thousands gives him no rest. His "gold and silver are cankered, and the rust of them" is a witness against him, and eats his "flesh as it were fire." He has "heaped treasure together for the last days," and it gives him no peace, no rest in mind nor body. While "the sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much . . . the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep." He cannot cast his care on Jesus, because Jesus is not the object of his life, and because, all his life-time, he has been carrying his load of care himself; and in this state of mind many rich men have committed suicide simply because they were afraid of coming to want in the future. It has been said that all those who have committed suicide on

account of this fear have been rich men. As a general rule we believe it to be a fact, and a remarkable fact. Such is the case of the "man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honor, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it. This is vanity, and it is an evil disease." On the other hand, we read of him who uses wealth to the glory of God: "Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God." God will not bestow this gift of enjoying cheerfully our possessions unless they are consecrated to him.

We must make up our minds that if we live to old age we can be happy without any hoarded wealth. Without being less diligent in making money, without being slothful in business, we must decide that we can be content if our latter years shall be spent in some home of the indigent if God shall please to place us there. The simple fact is, that while we may not be actually obliged to imitate Christ in

this respect, we must be satisfied in the contemplation of treading in his footsteps—of following him who had no home of his own on earth, no property, no lands, and not even the ready cash to pay his tribute money.

## CHAPTER XV.

NARRATIVES ILLUSTRATING THE LIBERAL  
USE OF MONEY.

SELF-DENIAL is an essential part of a Christian character. Thousands and thousands of martyrs throughout the ages have attested it by their blood. Lord Cobham lived in England a hundred years before the time of the great Reformation. He spent much of his fortune in hiring men to copy the Bible, and sending them out with it to distribute, like our modern colporteurs. He sustained, by his own private means, traveling preachers in the dioceses of London, Canterbury, Rochester, and Hereford, and after years of this labor was roasted alive, suspended over a slow fire, for his devotion. We are living in these modern days, imperiled by no such persecutions, in the grateful shadow of the tree which such men planted. Had they not given their fortunes and lives to spread the Gospel we

might to this day have been reading our Bibles by the dim light of some ecclesiastical dungeon, or seen the block or the stake awaiting us if we refused to deny our principles. As we consider the lives of multitudes who have labored and suffered for God, we must never forget that, whether called to endure what they did or not, we must be willing and ready to go to any extremity to which it may please God to call us.

There are many in humble circumstances, of whom the world has never heard, who are treading in this path. A letter was received at the head-quarters of one of our missionary societies, from a pastor in Massachusetts, of which the following is an extract:—

“Day before yesterday a plain farmer and his wife called on me and stated that they wanted to get me to transmit some money to the Board. The woman modestly hinted that it cost many a hard churning and hard day’s work to raise the money, but if it might be the means of saving one poor heathen she should be satisfied. The man said, with tears in his eyes, that when he thought of the multi-

tudes of the heathen who were perishing without the Gospel he wanted to do something. They handed me a roll of five hundred dollars, which I inclose. This is the second donation of the same amount which they have made me in four or five years."

We recollect the impression it made upon us years ago, in the preachers' meeting of New York, when one of our ministers rose and related a circumstance in substance as follows:—

"I met a friend this morning with whom I stopped and conversed a few minutes. A person came up while we talked, and asked him for a contribution toward some object. He took out his pocket-book and gave him five dollars, and thanked him for asking him. We went on together. Another person accosted him and asked him to help a superannuated preacher. Again the pocket-book appeared, and he handed him a bill the amount of which I did not see, and thanked him also for making the application. I then made some remark on the subject, when he replied:—

" ' Brother, I came to this city when I was a poor boy. I could neither read nor write.

God converted my heart and put me in his Church, and I made up my mind when I began to serve him that I never would refuse to give in answer to a proper application. The Lord blessed me and gave me means to give. I understand you are building a new church. You have not asked me for a subscription, but I wish to give you something.'

"The pocket-book appeared again for the third time, and he handed me fifty dollars. And what I rejoice in is this, that there are many such men in this great city."

Yes, there are thousands of men who belong to all denominations, whole-souled, self-denying, liberal men, who are using their wealth for Christ. But how many are there who, as God gives them the means, enlarge their expenditures in every thing else, and give no more for Christ than they did years before!

In one of the impressive and pointed articles of C. C. North, Esq., on the "Dangers of Methodism," this subject is discussed. He says:—

"A farmer has driven his family to church with a pair of three hundred-dollar horses, more remarkable for strength than for beauty;



but, getting rich, he desires to exchange them for a thousand-dollar pair. Let him bestow seven hundred dollars on charitable objects, and then pay a like amount for the horses. So in every case, if a man pour into the Lord's treasury a sum equal to the difference between objects of necessity and luxury, his heart will be kept so alive to the right use of wealth that he will be in little danger of treading forbidden paths.

“If he cannot spare the capital for both classes of objects—luxurious and charitable—let him provide for the last or wait. It will not hurt him nor his family. The longer they retain fellowship with their poor but spiritual brethren the better it will be for them, and the more they will certainly have to give. The practice of even prosperous Methodists should be reversed. Instead of exhibiting the fruits of success in altered family conditions—a new house, new furniture, new equipage, costly attire, etc.—let enlarged giving be the evidence of prosperity. A congregation startled by a heavy contribution would know that a lucky trade had taken place, or that stocks had

risen. Let donations to God precede gifts to the family. The example of the Israelites, who gave to God the first-fruits of their increase, should be the law of the modern Church. Thus would be fulfilled the words of Christ, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' In the pervading spirit of this law the danger from riches will pass, material power will be united with the spiritual, and, joined in indissoluble wedlock, as God intended them to be, they will go forth on their mission of good-will to man.

"The whole income of our people cannot be less than \$500,000,000, the net profit of which at ten per cent. would be \$50,000,000; the contributions to all objects within the Church cannot exceed \$12,000,000, and outside \$3,000,000 more. Thus \$15,000,000 out of \$50,000,000 leaves \$35,000,000.

"The danger to Methodism, then, lies in this vast sum amassed, but not for God's glory, for it goes into family luxuries, into real estate, into stocks, into business enterprises. What may we expect from it but that the coming genera-

tions will become effeminate, restless under the restraints of the Discipline, devoid of the spirit of self-denial, until God shall raise up another people, who, imitating the simplicity and spirituality of the fathers, shall inherit their glory. Against this sum of \$35,000,000 the whole enginery of the Church must be brought to bear, for it antagonizes every doctrine of the Gospel—it fosters pride, it engenders covetousness, it breeds worldly-mindedness, it utterly ignores the command of Jesus, ‘Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth.’ ”

There is no danger that God will allow us to suffer by commencing to give more freely than our neighbors around us. Thousands of examples, besides the examples of Scripture, confirm the truth of every promise which we have quoted. We have now before us the brief narrative of one who was not afraid to trust the sure words of inspiration. He was a farmer, with a limited education in a common school, slow of speech, like Moses, and of simple manners and habits. At a period when western Massachusetts was a new country, he purchased a farm of rough, uncultivated land,

five miles from church and two miles from a school-house, and began his industrious toil, which he persevered in for half a century. When the cause of Christian benevolence began to develop its blessings, Uncle Joel, the name by which he was known, avowed himself among its earliest, as he has proved one of its staunchest, friends. His charitable gifts were always about fivefold as great as those of his neighbors in like circumstances with him. This made them shake their heads and say, "Uncle Joel will certainly fail; his farm is not paid for, and it is too poor to support such extravagance." But Uncle Joel worked hard, thought and prayed much, and said nothing. Soon he purchased another farm, and in due time another—and paid for them, too—all the time giving largely for Christ's cause. After the predictions of his neighbors had repeatedly failed—instead of the failure of Uncle Joel—the tune was changed. Whenever a charitable appeal was made, every body was ready to say, "Uncle Joel can give, whoever else cannot. The Lord prospers Uncle Joel." Yes, the Lord did prosper Uncle Joel. His family

grew up around him virtuous and happy, refined and educated young men and women, a blessing to the community in which they dwelt.

Among our converts in pagan lands sometimes the Christian virtue of self-denial is conspicuously manifested. The following, which was published some time ago in one of our papers, is an example of what the Gospel can do even for the heathens:—

“The thoughts and prayers of the Nestorian Mission had been occupied in a plan for sending native missionaries into the mountains, but the news of the troubles at home, and the shortness of funds, seemed likely to blast their hopes. At the monthly concert in Geog Topa, a native pastor was preaching from the text, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive,’ with the hope of raising twenty or thirty dollars for the mountain mission. While preaching he was disturbed by whispering, and begged the people to be quiet, when one replied, ‘You stir us up and then command us to be silent.’ Another then cried out, ‘I will give one tammaun [two dollars and ten cents] for mission-

aries to the mountains.' This was like a spark that ignited the whole congregation. A common impulse to give moved the entire assembly, while the preacher stood silent and amazed, unable to finish his sermon. Men gave money, wheat, rice, and raisins. One man, who had saved enough for a broadcloth coat, brought the money, saying, 'I will wear cotton this year, and give the money for Christ.' Women ripped off silver beads and clasps from their dresses, brought their ear and finger rings, and others gave their embroidered head-dresses, mantles, cotton, cloth, butter, rice, until the amount increased to seventy tamauns.

"The next day was the monthly concert in the city, at which many of the helpers from the different stations assemble. The pastor from Geog Topa gave an account of the events of the previous day, displaying the ornaments, clothing, and money, and telling of the tithes and first fruits of the fields and vineyards, and how they continued giving till the setting of the sun. Immediately a man arose and offered one tamaun, another two, another three, another a fourth of the fruits of his vineyard,

and one poor man, who had nothing but a mat, said, 'I will give that mat.' The same impulse actuated all present. Many of the instances were very touching and affecting. Comparing the Church to the bride of Christ, they furnished the complete bridal outfit—the dress, ring, veil, crown, the horse to carry her to the mountains, and the guns for the salute. Those who had once given gave a second and third time in behalf of absent friends. One very poor priest, whose feeble wife had preserved a set of silver ornaments wherewith to purchase her tombstone, said with tears, 'She will give them up for Christ. He will know the spot where her dust is laid.' The hearts of all were full of joy, the faces radiant, their prayers warm and overflowing.

"The whole amount contributed by these poor native Christians is about four hundred tamauns, or eight hundred and forty dollars, and more is expected. With regard to the self-denial and sacrifice thus manifested, there is this striking fact, that the capital represented at our monthly concerts is only a fraction of that of scores of country Churches. A rich

Nestorian is worth two hundred dollars; if very wealthy, from four hundred to eight hundred. There are only two or three men worth two thousand dollars."

We repeat, there are thousands of men in these modern days of wondrous liberality whom God has raised up to bless the world. A young man was teacher in our Sunday-school some years ago in a western city. He opened a little office as a banker, and as he served God, and gave to his cause according to his means, God honored and prospered him. He is now at the head of a large banking establishment in the West, and we read not long since, in one of the papers, of his giving a hundred thousand dollars toward the building of a church in the city where he commenced his business. What immense amounts have been given by such men within the last few years toward colleges and other educational institutions! But, alas! the great mass of our business men, mechanics, and farmers have not opened their eyes yet to the privilege of thus blessing the world. May God hasten the day when we shall all thus live to the glory of God!



## CHAPTER XVI.

WHETHER A CONVERTED SOUL, LEAVING THE EARTH WITHOUT BEING FULLY SANCTIFIED, CAN BE ADMITTED TO HEAVEN.

AT the time of conversion the soul is united to Christ by a spiritual union. It commences then a course of discipline which is to prepare it for dwelling with him in heaven. That discipline is varied according to its mental and spiritual condition, and according to the age at which it was led to the Saviour. Some come to him in childhood, and have comparatively little knowledge of the extent of the law of God ; but giving all to him, as far as they know, the sacrifice is accepted by an indulgent Father, who will reveal to them, as they can bear it, the length and breadth of his commands. Some are converted at mature age, whose knowledge is more perfect, and who, we might suppose, ought more rapidly to enter into the rest of faith. But at whatever age a man may be born again, God shows him as he

is able to bear it, step by step, and it may be often all at once, how he can make a fuller deeper consecration of his heart. If he shall do this, as he receives the light, he never falls into condemnation, but goes speedily onward until he sees the full extent of the Divine law, and then, by faith, he may enter the higher life of perfect love. Christians, however, too frequently, at some point or other, refuse to make this reconsecration, and fall first into indifference, and then into unbelief, as to the possibility of attaining this state.

But it is asked, "If a person is converted and living in a justified state, and he should die before he is wholly sanctified, would he be lost?" We might answer it by saying that nothing unholy can enter heaven; that while the Bible makes conversion an indispensable condition, it is not the only condition required for an eternity of bliss. It is not only necessary to accept the invitation to the marriage feast and become a guest, but we must put on the wedding garment. We might answer it by saying that God will not judge us at the last day by our conversion or by our faith in

Christ, but simply by our works. Here on earth we are received by him, accepted and forgiven by faith, without money or price—without works of any kind. *There* we are judged by the fruits which our faith shall bear. It is he who does Christ's will, whose house is founded on a rock. It is he who feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, visits the sick, and hears the sentence, "Come ye blessed." It is he who uses his talents, and not the unprofitable servant, whose ears are greeted by the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

We prefer, however, to reply by saying that it is not necessary to answer such an interrogatory at all, because it supposes a case which can never exist. *It is impossible that any man, woman, or child, who is living accepted of God, should die before being fully sanctified.* What is the object of our life on earth? To become fully prepared for heaven. A man's business here is to reach perfect love. If this be the great object of our present existence, every thing else must bend to it, even the hour of our death; and as our days are in his hands,

God calls us home at that very time which will affect most favorably our eternal destiny. He does this because he is a God of love, because he interferes, for our good, in every circumstance of our lives, even to the numbering of the very hairs of our head ; and, as a God of love, will not cut us off until our preparation for eternity is complete. This is what the Bible teaches us : “ He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it,”—*epitelesei*, complete it, bring it to perfection. “ He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” And if all things, how much more, and how much above every thing else, will he give us a fitness to stand in his presence before he calls us hence ! “ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they *shall be* filled.” Has he not said to the Christian, in whatever state of grace he may be, whether converted or wholly sanctified, “ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?” How full, how inspiring, this promise is, as we turn to the original Greek, where we find five negatives instead of two to express

God's unfailing love: "I will not—I will not leave thee; I will never, never, never forsake thee."

But we must observe that all this applies only to one who is actually living in a justified state—to one who is, sincerely and honestly, trying to do, as far as his light goes, the whole will of God. If he has ever heard or read the commands, "Be ye holy," "Go on to perfection," he is trying to obey them. His soul is on the stretch for a higher life. He is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. It does not apply to one who has backslidden from his first love, who is living, in the Church or out of the Church, according to a standard which he has set up for himself, and not according to the Bible. It does not apply to the lukewarm professor, who is neither cold nor hot. Such a one may die before he obtains perfect love, and instead of being saved, as he often fondly imagined he would be, his rejection by the Saviour is expressed in a figure of the utmost loathing, "I will spew thee out of my mouth." We may express our idea in a condensed form: if, as Christians, we are earnestly seeking to

be fully sanctified God will give us time for the completion of the work.

There is a tremendous penalty to pay if we indulge in unbelief and trifle with our heavenly calling. St. Paul, in Hebrews, refers to the Jews who, through want of courage and faith, failed to go up and take possession of the promised land. God forgave their murmuring, their rebellion, even their worship of the golden calf; but for cowardice and unbelief they were condemned to die in the wilderness. They could never see that land of milk and honey, which was to have been the end of all their wanderings. "Let us therefore fear," he says; and again, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest;" and again, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," [the first principles which we have already learned,] "let us go on unto perfection," etc. "And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they

shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.' This is the fearful penalty imposed by the Bible for not going on to perfection. It is, first, the losing of the freshness, tenderness, zeal, and vigor of our first love, and then the falling away from the clearness of our faith and the activity of our lives, until we reach a point—and God only knows where that point may be in our history—when it is impossible for us to rise again. It is true, we may sometimes sing:

“ While yet the lamp holds out to burn  
The vilest sinner may return.”

But there are no such words and no such doctrine in the Bible. The clearest case of conversion recorded in the Old Testament is that of Saul, the first king of Israel. 1 Sam. x, 9, 10. But he failed to go up to a higher life, and it is expressly said that the Spirit of the Lord departed from him, (1 Sam. xvi, 14,) and he ended his days on earth by committing suicide.

We have an example in Abraham of an opposite character. The time of his conversion is not recorded, but after he had left his coun-

try for a strange land, in obedience to the command of Jehovah, the time came when God spoke to him of a deeper work of grace, and said, "Walk before me and be thou perfect." As we read his previous history we can have no doubt that he was already converted; but that he was not fully sanctified appears clearly from various incidents in his life which the Bible reveals to us. Here was the state of grace to which he was called, "Be thou perfect." Then God showed him how this state was to be attained. He said to him, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." This was the renewed consecration, and this was the mode of entering a higher life. He could give nothing greater, nothing dearer, than his son, and he could enjoy the blessing only by obeying the command.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## WITNESSES OF PERFECT LOVE.

WHO will make this renewed dedication to God in thought, word, life, time, business, food, money, property, and look by faith for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which will purify his heart? Do we forget that we must be holy, that we must be saints on earth, or the heavenly gates will be closed against us? Why were the early Christians called saints and holy brethren? Because it was expected they should be holy here. Why was Paul so earnest that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus? Because he knew that without this perfection they could not enter heaven. Why did the Saviour say, "Blessed are the pure in heart?" Because he intended his people to be pure. Why do our own hearts tell us so often, independently of all conscious Bible truth, that we must cease from sin in this life if we expect to be saved?

Do you say that holiness is only for certain persons? Then we answer, that heaven is only for these certain persons, and you had better be one of them. Of him who has the hope of heaven we read the express statement, "Every man who hath this hope in him purifieth himself."

But you ask, Who is holy here? Where are the witnesses? Shall we open the Bible, that Word which cannot lie? Here, then, before the glory which fell upon the Church at the day of Pentecost, and which has since continued with it, giving us higher power than the saints of preceding ages; here, even before the light of the Jewish dispensation, is Noah, whom God declared to be a just man and perfect in his generations. Here is Enoch, who walked so closely with God that he was translated. Here is Job, of whom the Lord said when Satan accused him of insincerity and sin, that he was a perfect and an upright man, "one that feareth God and escheweth evil." Mark, God asserts not that he *tried* to avoid evil, but that he *did* avoid it. And Elijah, was he sinning when the chariot of fire swept in between

him and Elisha, or had he ceased from sin and learned to do well? And the father and mother of John the Baptist, were they always sinning and repenting when it was said of them that they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless?

And what shall we say of Fletcher, Bramwell, Abbott, Carvosso, Nelson, Hester Ann Rogers, Mrs. Fletcher, Lady Maxwell, and a thousand others? Were they all mistaken, and did they perpetuate a base falsehood when they said they enjoyed the blessing of perfect love? Who can read that noble monument of untiring research and literary talent, Stevens' "History of Methodism," without being convinced that herein lay the strength of the founders of our Church? If every family would possess themselves of these volumes and read them, we have no doubt the result would be a grand revival throughout all our Church. How few of us, in these modern times, have allowed our souls to be quickened and inspired by the perusal of the lives of Fletcher, Bramwell, and the other heroes of faith to whom we have

referred! If the Apostle Paul, in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, cited the worthies who preceded the era in which he lived to inflame the zeal and strengthen the faith of the early Christians, how appropriate it is that we should seek incentives to a closer walk with God by an acquaintance with the courage, the struggles, the sufferings of those to whom we owe the institutions under which we dwell. And then, as we look further back upon the era of the great Reformation, and behold Luther, Knox, Cobham, Savonarola, Huss, Lefevre, Gustavus Adolphus, and the great army of reformers and martyrs in England, Scotland, France, Germany, and Italy, giving all for Christ, many of them dying at the stake, on the block, in the dungeon, as they laid the foundations of the religious liberty which we now enjoy, who can count up the numbers who served God with a perfect heart?

John Wesley, in speaking of this full salvation, says: "I desired all those in London who made the same profession to come to me, all together at the Foundry, that I might be thoroughly satisfied. I desired that man of God.

Thomas Walsh, to give us the meeting there. When we met, first one of us, and then the other, asked them the most searching questions we could devise. They answered every one without hesitation, and with the utmost simplicity, so that we were fully persuaded they did not deceive themselves. In the years 1759, 1760, 1761, and 1762, their numbers multiplied exceedingly not only in London and Bristol, but in various parts of Ireland as well as England. Not trusting to the testimony of others, I carefully examined most of them myself, and in London alone I found *six hundred and fifty-two* members of our Society who were exceeding clear in their experience [as to perfect love], and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt. I believe no year has passed since that time wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others, but sometimes in one part of England or Ireland, sometimes in another." And then he adds the statement: "Every one of these (after the most careful inquiry I have not found one exception either in Great Britain or Ireland) has declared that his deliverance from sin was *instantaneous*—that

the change was wrought in a moment. Had half of these, or one third, or one in twenty, declared that it was gradually wrought in *them*, I should have believed this with regard to *them*, and thought that some were gradually sanctified and some instantaneously. But as I have not found in so long a space of time a single person speaking thus, as all who believe they are sanctified declare with one voice that the change was wrought in a moment, I cannot but believe that sanctification [entire sanctification] is commonly, if not always, an instantaneous work."

If we will lay aside the eye of prejudice and make allowance for the imperfection of human nature, and look only for a perfection of love, we will find in this very day persons living in the enjoyment of this blessing scattered all over the land. And we can testify, after an experience of twenty-five years in preaching the Gospel, that they are the men and women most to be relied on in the Church. There are cases in which unsanctified people make a profession of perfect love, just as there are thousands of cases in which unconverted per-

sons make a profession of conversion. But does this destroy the usefulness of those who really enjoy that blessing? When Wesley began to preach, the great mass of Church members would not believe that they could obtain any witness of their acceptance with God, just as many now assert that there is no direct witness of any second blessing. Thank God, the time is coming when holiness shall be believed in every-where, sought for every-where, written every-where, even, as it is expressed in the language of inspiration, upon the bells of the horses.

We say the witnesses abound in this very day. Here are a husband and wife, we knew them well, who made a distinct profession of perfect love. Wherever they went, religion was their theme. Always in their places in the sanctuary and social meetings, and always ready to work for God, we knew just where to find them. Here is another; his praise was in all the Church. Here is another in a different charge—he is class-leader and steward. He is to-day the most useful man in one of the Churches of the New York District. Here is a

sister. "On such a day," said she, "I began to seek earnestly for perfect love. I felt I dared not live without it. On such a day, two months afterward, I found it, and for three years I have enjoyed this precious blessing." "I sought for purity of heart," said another faithful woman, "and after I found it, God gave me the conversion of my husband. I believe he never would have come to Christ had he not blessed me first with his perfect love."

A young lady moved out to the borders of civilization. She and her husband were both Christians. She had left her friends and sunny home, and, as far as she knew, had at her conversion given up all for Christ. But there, in a region wild and strange, she found that she still loved the world too well. She was alone one Sabbath morning in her new home. She had been reading, and feeling deeply convinced of her need of a higher state of grace, she laid the book aside, and knelt before God, inquiring, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "Give all for Christ."

With the sacred light which had been shin-



ing on her soul for weeks, illuminating every part of her moral being, she made a renewed consecration of all to him—her time, her thoughts, her dress, her words—and pleaded, “Lord, what more?” “Only believe.” “It is much to believe,” she inwardly replied, “that Christ will cleanse me from all sin, and keep me by his power spotless from the world. But I know he is almighty, and I will trust him henceforth, now and forever. Lord, I will—I do believe.”

She rose from her knees, her heart filled with peace. It was the peace which flowed as a river. When temptation came she found that a new power had been implanted within her soul, for she had entered the highway of holiness. Christ had taken full possession of her heart.

We knew a young man who was in business, residing in the city of New York. He was a Christian, and had been for years a member of an evangelical Church. Long and earnestly he sought a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit and victory over sin. One Sunday night he sat down and made in writing a renewed con-

secration of his heart to God, a part of which is as follows:—

“I do, O my God, solemnly surrender myself to thee, and do give and consecrate to thee my soul and body, my mind, my faculties, my talents, my time, the members of my body, my influence over others, all my powers of thought and exertion—every thing to be used just as thou choosest until death and through eternity. I beseech thee, give me the power, disposition, and will, to confirm and ratify this act.”

That renewed consecration led him to the object he had so long sought—a renewed baptism of the spirit of Pentecost. For years he had groaned and prayed over the corruption of his heart. Now, as he entered by faith a higher Christian life, he found that where sin had once existed it had disappeared. Day after day passed, and he perceived that a depth of peace had entered his soul which was beyond any previous experience. By watching and prayer, by clinging to the Saviour, he saw he had a power to live without condemnation. Every doubt of his acceptance with God had

disappeared. To lie down at night was to feel, without a cloud, that sudden death was heaven. And thus he continued.

Personally, we ought to be a believer in perfect love. The example of a sainted mother impresses every hour of our existence. The recollection of different stages in her Christian experience, from our childhood upward, is a silent but effective testimony that holiness of heart is attainable in this life. There were years when, amid earthly cares and sorrows, she expressed to us the sentiment, "I am tempest-tossed and tried, but I find relief in God."

There were other succeeding years when we observed a change in her language.

"I am no longer troubled about the things of this world as I once was. God has taken away every fear and every anxiety. I find not only relief in him, but a perfect rest. He gives me a peace that sorrows no longer ruffle; and as to my future state I have no doubt whatever that when I am called away, be it suddenly or otherwise, I shall be saved."

And it was suddenly that her heavenly Father pleased to call her. Early one summer

morning she fell asleep without a single struggle, so peacefully, so triumphantly, that as she ceased breathing a smile illumined her lip. We believe it was a welcome to the angels waiting to conduct her up through the gates of the city. The same lips were our guide, at nine years of age, to the Saviour. A clear, definite conviction, and a conversion as clear and definite, forbids us ever to doubt that our sins were then forgiven. Years of struggle with sin, an intense longing for deliverance from it, daily and regular prayer, a frequent and daily reading of the Bible, confirmed impressions which the Spirit of God made from time to time in our heart that we must rise to a higher and purer Christian life than that which we enjoyed. The subject was presented to us in this way:—

“Heaven is holy, but you are not holy. There is no sin there, but you have not yet learned to cease from sin; you must reach that point or you are not prepared to dwell with Christ.”

During these years, however, we never lost the evidence of our acceptance with God, ex-

cept when we consciously sinned ; then, not resting in it, we rose again, wrestling in prayer until we saw the light of his countenance again upon our soul. The time came when the portals of a higher life opened to us, and we found that, while we continued in watching and prayer, a new power was implanted within us. We felt then such an increased sense of the sinfulness of our past life—such a consciousness of our own utter helplessness—such a revelation of the imperfection of all that we could think or do, that we were able to take Christ more fully than we had ever done before as our only atonement, our only strength, our only salvation.

Only by this grace shall we be able to obey Christ, in being always ready for death. He has said positively and without qualification, “Be ye ready.” This is his command. If we expect to reach heaven we must obey him in this as in every thing else. So far from being impossible, it is the state in which we most easily do the will of God—the state in which we enjoy the greatest bliss. In a mountainous district of the State of New York, a Christian brother,

one evening, spoke in fervent tones of his love to Jesus. As he sat down and joined in singing his praises there was a fullness of joy that shone upon his countenance revealing what he felt in his heart. The prayer-meeting was held at his house, and at its conclusion he retired to rest. During the course of the night steps were heard in his room, and his children made the inquiry, "Father, are you not well?"

"Yes, but I am so happy that I cannot sleep."

In the morning he did not appear as usual at breakfast. His children entered his sleeping apartment. A heavenly smile rested on his countenance, but his spirit had flown to the joys which had been dawning on his soul.

"In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing."

**THE END.**











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